

RIVERS:
OR THE 4.
EAST INDIAN.

A COMEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

By M. G. Lewis, Esq. M. P.

AUTHOR OF THE MONK, CASTLE SPECTRE, &c.

Quadringenta tibi si quis Deus, aut similis Dis,
Et melior fati donaret, Homuncio quantus
Ex nihilo fieret, quantus Virronis amicus !
" Da Treble !"—" Pone ad Treblum !"—" Via, Frater, ab ipso
" Illius !"—O nummi, vobis hunc præstat honorem !
Vos estis Fratres !

The Rivers Journal, Sat. 5.

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PREFACE.

THE Plot of this Comedy, as far as regards Rivers's visits to Modish and Mrs. Ormond, was taken from the Novel of Sidney Biddulph; Mr. Sheridan had already borrowed the same incident from the same source, and employed it (though in a different manner) in the "School for Scandal."

The "East Indian" was admirably well acted from beginning to end, particularly the part of Rivers by Mr. Kemble; nothing was overcharged, nothing under-acted. Indeed, to call his performance *acting*, is doing it injustice: It was nature throughout.

This Comedy was written before I was sixteen. It was performed last season for the benefits of Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Powell, and, in consequence of the approbation with which it was received, was brought forward again in last December. It was again received with applause, for which I thank the public: the suc-

PREFACE.

ceeding representations did not prove attractive, for which I here make my acknowledgments to Mr. Sheridan, who blocked up my road, mounted on his great tragic war-horse Pizarro, and trampled my humble pad-nag of a Comedy under foot without the least compunction. My Readers must decide, whether my Play merited so transient an existence; it is unnecessary to say, that *I* am quite of the contrary opinion.

Jan. 14, 1800.

M. G. LEWIS.

PROLOGUE. BY THE AUTHOR.

SPOKEN BY MR. C. KEMBLE.

IN life's gay spring, while yet the careless hour,
Dance light on blooming beds of early flowers;
Ere knowledge of the world has taught the mind
To sorrow for itself and shun mankind,
In sweet, vain dreams still Fancy bids the boy
Doat on fair prospects of ideal joy:
Life's choicest fruits then court his eager hand;
Each eye is gentle, and each voice is bland;
False friendship prompts no sigh, and draws no tear,
And love seems scarce more beauteous, than sincere!

Ere sixteen years had wing'd their wanton flight,
While yet his head was young, and heart was light,
Our author plann'd these scenes; and while he drew,
How bright each colour seem'd, each line how true.
Gods! with what rapture every speech he spoke!
Gods! how he chuckled as he penn'd each joke!
And when at length his ravish'd eyes survey
That wondrous work complete—a Five Act Play,
His youthful heart how self-applauds swell!
——“It isn't perfect, but its vastly well!”——

Sincethen, with many a pang, our Bard has bought
More just decision, and less partial thought:
Kind vanity no longer blinds his sight,
His fillet falls, and lets in odious light.

PROLOGUE.

Time bids the darling work its leaves expand,
Each flower Parnassian withers in his hand :
Stern judgment every latent fault detects,
And all its fancied beauties prove defects.

Yet, for she thinks some scenes possess an art
To please the fancy, and to melt the heart,
Thalia bids his play to-night appear,
Thalia call'd in heaven, but Jordan here *.
So frail his hope, so weak he thinks his cause,
Our author says, he dare not ask applause;
He only begs, that with indulgence new,
You'll hear him patiently, and hear him through :
Then, if his piece proves worthless, never sham it ;
But damn it, gentle friends—Oh ! damn it ! damn it !

* The Comedy was first performed for the Benefit of Mrs. Jordan.

EPILOGUE. BY THE AUTHOR.

SPOKEN BY MR. BANNISTER, JUN.

Thunder and Lightning.

*The Ghost of QUEEN ELIZABETH rises in a
Flash of Fire.*

STARE not, fair dames, nor criticise my dress;
You see before you jolly Old Queen Bess,
Who from the land of roasting, boiling, stewing,
Is come to see what you above are doing!
Below, where some slight peccadilloes sent me,
Long did a wish, a foolish wish torment me,
For some few days in Britain to revive,
And view that land once more, I lov'd so well alive:—
This wish so toia'd me, morn, night, noon and eve,

That

EPILOGUE.

That I resolv'd to ask Old Pluto's leave;
And though I knew to gain the point was hard,
Boldly dispatch'd Lord Burleigh with this card.

" Queen Bess's comp'ts to Pluto—begs to say
" She hopes this card will find him well to-day;
" And should her visit now convenient be,
" Means to drink sulphur with his majesty."
For in our lower realms the truth to utter,
Sulphur means tea, and brimstone bread and butter.

Well, he receiv'd me, and (my sulphur sipp'd,)
" Dear Sir," quoth I—" I'm nervous, sick, and hipp'd.
" Besides, have frightful dreams, and truth to speak,
" Scarce eat a chicken's pinion in a week.
" Shock'd at my sickly plight and strange condition,
" I've ask'd advice of maint and maint physician;
" And having heard them with one voice declare,
" Nothing can cure me but a change of air,
" 'Tis my design, for health and for diversion,
" To Albion's Isle to make a short excursion——"

At this Old Pluto look'd extremely glum,
First scratch'd his head, then frown'd, and bit his
thumb;

At length the business sifted to the dregs,
Thus spoke the king with the flame-coloured legs:

" Go,

PILOGUE.

"Go, Bess," he answer'd ('twas not over civil
To crop my name, but 'tis an ill-bred Divle!)

"Go, Bess," he answer'd; "you've my full per-
mission

"To visit London on this one condition.

"To-night at Drury, (so the papers tell)

"Is play'd a *Comédie* that's *toute nouvelle*—

[His majesty speaks French extremely well]

"I to this piece your new existence tie,

"And, as it lives or dies, you live or die.

"Should the dread ordeal with success be pass'd;

"Your second life shall for the season last;

But should it fail, instant (I'd have you know it)

"Here you return, and with you—bring the
poet."

I took his offer, pack'd up goods and
Strait bodice, farthingales, and little muffs;
And lest old Dis should take his promise back,
Through yon trap-door reach'd Drury in a crack.
Now then I come before the Public's throne,
To plead the author's cause, and eke my own.
Think with what terrors must my bosom tremble,
Since that the piece is bad I can't dissemble:

Yet,

EPILOGUE.

Yet, weary with my journey, faint with fright,
Pray don't oblige me to set out to-night;
Rather with kind applause prolong my stay,
And for a few short nights support the play.
But, should my prayers prove vain, should the
 piece fail,
The plot thought dull,—the humour coarse and
 stale,
Beside out of sorts, and poet out of feather,
Are damn'd alike, and jog down stairs together.

Dramatis Personae.

LORD LISTLESS	-	-	Mr. PALMER.
MODISH	-	-	Mr. BARRYMORE.
RIVERS	-	-	Mr. KEMBLE.)
BEAUCHAMP	-	-	Mr. C. KEMBLE.
WALSINGHAM	-	-	Mr. AICKIN.
FRANK	-	-	Mr. BANNISTER, Jun.*
SQUEEZ'EM	-	-	Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.
FRIPONEAU	-	-	Mr. WEWITZER.
TRIFLE	-	-	Mr. FISHER.
JOHN	-	-	Mr. WEBB.
ROBERT	-	-	Mr. EVANS.

LADY CLARA MODISH	Miss	STUART.
Mrs. ORMOND	-	Mrs. POWELL.
Miss CHATTERALL	-	Miss POPE.
ZORAYDA	-	Mrs. JORDAN.
Mrs. SLIP-SLOP	-	Mrs. SPARKS.
Lady HUBBUB	-	Mrs. CUYLER.
Mrs. BLAB-ALL	-	Miss TIDSWELL.
Mrs. TIFFANY	-	Mrs. COATES.
ANNE	-	Mrs. JONES.

Ladies, Gentlemen, Servants, &c.

* This part was latterly played by Mr. WATHEN, as was that of ZORAYDA, by Miss BIGGS.

RIVERS:
OR,
THE EAST INDIAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in an Hotel.*

WALSINGHAM *is seated by a Table; ROBERT waiting.*

WALSINGHAM.

BEAUCHAMP, say you?

Rob. I think, that's the gentleman's name, sir.

Wal. Shew him up—[*Exit Robert.*]*—*I'm glad that he's returned to England; for, though a young man, and a gay man, Beauchamp is among the few whom I esteem.

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

My dear Ned!

Beau. Mr. Walsingham!—This pleasure is quite unexpected; but where have you been concealed these hundred years? I was afraid, that Cynthia wearied of her Endymion had pitched upon *you* for his successor, and believed you at this moment an inhabitant of the moon.

Wal. No, no, my young friend; the goddess has too much taste to select such an old weather-beaten fellow for a Cecisbeo. But if you seriously ask, what I've been doing for these last three years, you must know, I've been fool-hunting.

B

Beau.

Beau. Fool-hunting?

Wal. Yes, Being of an adust cynical constitution, infinite laughter is absolutely necessary for my health: for this purpose my physician prescribed me a course of fools, and truly I've reaped great benefit from his advice.

Beau. Why then, leave Great-Britain? Heaven knows, a scarcity of fools is not one of our wants!

Wal. True; but the growth of English absurdity for the year 95 not being to my taste, I determined to change my fools, as other invalids change the air; but after all, I must give the preference to the folly of my own country.

Beau. Your own country is very much obliged to you; but since this is your taste, I've a superb feast for you in Lord Listless.

Wal. What, your uncle?

Beau. No; to my sorrow, he sleeps with his forefathers, while my noble cousin possesses his title and estate, and, what is worst, has me entirely in his power.

Wal. How so?

Beau. 'Tis a tedious story: but the short of it is, that when I married, my generous uncle discharged my debts to the tune of 3000l.; unluckily he neglected to destroy my acknowledgement, which falling into his son's hands, the present Earl wisely keeps it, and calls himself my subcreditor. Discharge it for some time I cannot; but, however, unless we disagree, he will not press me for immediate payment.

Wal. Well, well, and even if he should, we'll find means to satisfy him; and so away with that gloomy face, dear Ned! As soon as I saw you, I guessed that something was wrong; but I'm glad, 'twas nothing more than a pecuniary difficulty.

Beau. Would to heaven, it were?

Wal.

Wal. Hey, Why what other cause—

Beau. Oh! Mr. Walsingham, how shall I tell you—

Wal. Out with it!

Beau. That I have been—That I still am—a villain!

Wal. I don't believe one word of it: he, who dares own that he has been a villain, must needs already have ceased to be one.

Beau. Hear me then, and judge for yourself—You know well the character of the woman, to whose fate, while I was still a stripling, accident not affection united mine.

Wal. Yes, and a miserable life she led you!

Beau. Jealous without love, profuse without generosity, negligent in her dress, violent in her temper, coarse in her manners, with no virtue but that one which she owed to constitution; not to principle, during three years she rendered my home an hell. My patience was at length exhausted; I made over to her the remnants of an estate which her extravagance had ruined, bade this domestic fiend an eternal farewell, and sailed, under the assumed name of Dorimant, to India.

Wal. I see no harm as yet. Lived with her three years? I wouldn't have lived with her three days—No! not to have buried her on the fourth.

Beau. Soon after my arrival, it was my chance to save the life of the famous Mortimer, who—

Wal. The Nabob, whose immense wealth—

Beau. The same. This procured me admission to his house, where I saw his daughter: She was lovely, and grateful to me for the preservation of her father's life; opportunities of seeing each other were frequent, and in an unguarded moment—yet heaven can witness to my intentions!—in an unguarded moment I—I was a villain!

Wal. [*Shaking his head*] Little better, I must say!

Beau. Her weakness and my perfidy were soon discovered. Marry her, I could not; her father's wrath was dreadful; she sought a refuge from it in my arms, and fled with me from India.

Wal. From India, and from her father?——
Young man! Young man! And what says your wife to all this?

Beau. Soon after our separation, I find that she went abroad, nor has she been heard of for near two years, either by her banker, or her friends. Report says, that she is dead: If so, my hand is Zorayda's; and in the mean while she resides with my cousin, Lady Clara Modish.

Wal. Lady Clara? And how the devil came she to receive her?

Beau. The devil made her, the great devil of all! Money, man, darling money! Her Ladyship had been extravagant, and so I paid a gaming debt or two for her: besides this, the appearance of protecting a friendless orphan flatters that ostentatious sensibility, which it is her passion to display on every occasion.

Wal. But does she know the history of her protégée?

Beau. I was compelled to trust her with it under a promise of profound secrecy.

Wal. And how has she kept her promise?

Beau. Why really extremely well, considering she's a woman of fashion. She only confided it to her most intimate friends, who told it again to all their particular acquaintance, who repeated it to every creature they knew; and now the whole town is informed of the whole transaction.

Wal. And you really have the heart to present this poor young creature to the world in a light so despicable?

Beau. Spare your reproaches, my dear sir! they have already been made by a very able advocate. You remember Modish's sister, Emily? *Wal.*

Wal. Young Ormond's widow? A charming creature!

Beau. She is interested about Zorayda, and has frequently written to me on this subject. Her remonstrances have carried with them conviction, and I am resolved to wait on her this morning to entreat her protection for Zorayda; and, should she grant it, to engage, cruel as it will be to the feelings of us both, no more to visit my love, till I can offer her my hand and fortune.

Wal. A very good resolution too: I long to see your goddess.

Beau. Come then to Lady Clara's, and behold the fictitious charms of modish beauty effaced by the native graces, the enchanting simplicity of my ardors, my bewitching Zorayda! But as this is but weak attraction for a satirist, if you still exclaim, "Thou, Folly, art my goddess!" I can promise you some diversion in your own way; for Lady Clara's table is seldom unsupplied with a plentiful banquet of fools.

Wal. Every table in town may be supplied with that article at a very small expence, I doubt not; for, after all my peregrinations in quest of folly, I am decided, that no country abounds more with that luxury than little England; where absurdities spring as kindly as mushrooms upon dunghills, and you can't turn a corner without starting a fool!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Lady CLARA'S.

Enter Mrs. TIFFANY and SLIP-SLOP.

Mrs. Tif. No really, Mrs. Slip-slop, I can't stay a moment longer, and I'm sure her la'ship will find the dress quite the thing.

Slip. Can't you confer your departure for one quarter of an hour, Mrs. Tiffany? My Lady'll be mightily aspirated, if you go without seeing her.

Mrs. Tif. [*ringing the bell.*] Quite impossible! There's Lady Tawdry, Lady Tick, Miss Flash, and Lady Rachel Rounabout all waiting for me at this very moment.

Enter JOHN.

My chariot and servants, if you please, sir. [*Exit John.*]—Good morning, Mrs. Slip-slop, [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Slip. My chariot and servants!—Lud! Lud! how I detest and extricate that conceited trolop! She affects to contemnify me too, and why? Sure my figure and hidication an't anterior to her's; and as to birth, I hope my contraction's as extinguished as Mrs. Tiffany's, or truly I should be sorry for it!

Enter ZORAYDA.

Zor. Is the mantua-maker gone, Mrs. Slip-slop?

Mrs. Slip. Yes; but left this note for you, Miss. [*Zorayda reads.*] Superdescribed, I see, to Miss Mandeville, though she knows well enough that's only a consumed name. Now do tell me, dear Miss, what is your right one? What is your real abomination?

Zor. Impertinent questions, Mrs. Slip-slop.

Mrs. Slip. Oh! but if you'll only tell me, I'll be so secret—!

Zor. Of that I'm certain, Mrs. Slip-slop; for I well believe—

Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Slip-slop!

Mrs. Slip. So far, indeed!

Zor. Not a jot farther.

Enter JOHN.

John. Lord Littlefs.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. Slip. [*Aside.*] Miss keeps her secret as close as if 'twere a scheme she had prevented for paying off the natural debt, and was frightful that somebody would embellish her ideras.

[*Exit.*]
Enter

Enter Lord LISTLESS.

Lord List. Quite alone, Miss Mandeville!—
Where's Clara?

Zor. Still at breakfast in her dressing room.---
She slept ill, and left her bed late this morning.

Lord List. She was quite in the right; for, my
part I wonder why people leave their beds at all,
for they only contrive to bore themselves and their
acquaintance. Now I've some thoughts of going
to bed one of these nights, and never getting up
again.

Zor. Oh! pray, my Lord, put that scheme
into execution, for the benefit of your friends as
well as yourself.

Lord List. Yes, 'twould certainly take, for
people imitate every thing I do so ridiculously,
that 'pon my soul I'm bored to death with them;
but, to say the truth, I'm bored with every thing
and every body.

Zor. I should be sorry to increase your ennui,
and so wish you good morning.

Lord List. No, no; stay, pray stay; for there's
nothing I like so much as the company of Ladies.

Zor. [*drawing away her hand.*] I'm sorry that
I can't return the compliment; but there's nothing
I like so little as the company of Lords?

Lord List. Umph! Pert enough, 'pon my
soul!

Enter Lady CLARA.

Lord List. Morning, Clara! You look fright-
ful to-day.

Lady Clara. Do I? I dare say I do: for my
nerves are in such a state! Oh! and then I had
such a dream! Only conceive: Methought my
favourite little Pug, Fidelio, had fallen into the
Serpentine; I saw him struggling, heard him
barking, and woke in an agony of tears!

Zor.

Zor. Exquisite sensibility!

Lady Clara. Ha, Beauchamp!

Enter BEAUCHAMP and WALSINGHAM.

Beau. Let me present a friend to you, Lady Clara, whose absence from England you've heard me frequently lament---Mr. Walsingham.

Lady Clara. Your friends are always welcome here for your sake; but Mr. Walsingham will be welcome for his own.

Wal. Your ladyship does me honour.--[*Aside to Beauchamp*] Is she a fool to?

Beau. None of the wisest, I promise you---Miss Mandeville, Mr. Walsingham. [*Zorayda courtesies.*]

Wal. Mandeville? I've known several of that name. Who---

Lady Clara. [*laughing.*] Yes; but not of Miss Mandeville's family, I take it. Were they, Zorayda?

[Beau. [*aside to Walsingham.*] Hush! Mandeville's an assumed name.

Wal. Oh! the devil! Why didn't you tell me so before?

Beau. But, Lady Clara, I've another friend to introduce.

Lady Clara. I shall be very---[*turning round; then with indifference*]--Oh, you wretch, my husband!

Zor. [*aside to Beauchamp.*] You couldn't have introduced a greater stranger.

Enter MODISH.

Mod. Mr. Walsingham, I rejoice to see you. Just returned, I suppose?---You rested well, I hope, Lady Clara? [*carelessly.*]

Lady Clara. Perfectly; never passed a quieter night in my life.

[John

[John delivers a Letter to Modish, and goes off.]

Mod. [opens, and then throws it on the table.]

Rivers.

Wal. I beg I mayn't prevent---

Mod. Oh! it's from a poor relation; 'twill keep.—Beauchamp, were you at Lady Sparkle's last night?

Beau. Yes; and found it very fashionable, and very dull.

Lady Clara. Oh! the terms are now synonymous.

Mod. Quite; for since every thing that's fashionable is insipid, in mere justice every thing that's insipid must be fashionable.

Wal. Indeed! Is this really so, my lord?

Lord List. Matter of fact, sir, 'pon my soul! Insipidity is now the very criterion of fashion.-- A man of *ton* should never dance but when he's not wanted, or sing but when no body wishes to hear him. He should yawn at a comedy, laugh at a tragedy, cry, "damn'd bore" at both, tread upon his neighbour's toes, hunt with a tooth-pick in his mouth, see women tumbled down stairs without trying to stop them, and, in order to be perfectly fashionable, should make himself completely disagreeable!

Zor. Bless me! how admirably your Lordship's practice exemplifies your theory!

Lord List. Oh! you flatter me.

Zor. No really; I do you but justice when I protest that I never saw any thing half so fashionable or insipid as your Lordship.

Wal. Nor I, upon my honour!

Lord List. 'Pon my soul you're too obliging! Too obliging, 'pon my soul!

Lady Clara. Hark! A knock!

Zor. [looking from the window.] Now heaven preserve my hearing! 'tis Miss Chatterall.

Lady

Lady Clara. I'm glad of it, she always talks scandal, and scandal is the best thing in the world for the nerves.

Lord List. And she talks incessantly, which saves one the trouble of an answer.

Zor. But she is so malicious!

Lady Clara. She cheats horribly at play!

Mod. She's disagreeable and affected.

Lord List. She's a bore.

Beau. She's deceitful.

Lady Clara. She's abominable—

Enter Miss CHATTERALL.

Lady Clara. My dear creature, I'm so charmed to see you! We've not met this age!

Miss Chat. Oh, Lady Clara! such a dreadful thing has happened to me! I've been so shocked, and so quizzed, and all that!

Lady Clara. You alarm me!

Miss Chat. You must know, as I came along, another carriage got entangled with mine. A mob soon collected round us, and out of pure good nature and condescension, I thought I'd entertain them with a little graceful terror.

Lady Clara. How kind!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it? So, on this, I screamed in the most delightful way imaginable, practised my new Parisot attitudes, and threw myself into my very best convulsions.

Mod. And, I warrant, the spectators burst into tears?

Miss Chat. No truly, they burst out a laughing!

All. Oh, shameful!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it?—I declare I was just like Orphy, the old fiddler, playing to the stocks and stones! The more I squalled the more they laughed; and at last they made me so angry that

that I vowed never to go into fits again, except in the very best company.

Wal. And a mighty proper resolution too!

Miss Clar. Wasn't it?—But, Modish, what provoked me most was your uncle; that great gawky creature, General Truncheon. He never offered to help me the least bit. And then he ha-ha-ha'd, and he-he-he'd, and all that, so you've no idea!—shocking! Wasn't it?

Mod. Oh! you know my uncle's a blockhead; he's supposed to have the greatest body and least wit of any man in London.

Zor. That follows of course: I've observed, that in lofty houses the upper apartments are always the worst furnished.

Miss Chat. Very well, Miss Mandeville; extremely well indeed!—[*Aside*] I'll remember that, and sport it for my own.—But, Lord! I must be gone, or Lady Cogwell will be out, and I wouldn't miss seeing her for the world.

Lady Clara. Lady Cogwell! I thought she was your aversion?

Miss Chat. Oh, dear, so she is; but last night Mrs. Punt, playing with her at whist, found the ace of diamonds hid in her muff; so I'm going to comfort, and console, and vex, and tease her, and all that you know. Modish, lead me to my carriage. You won't go with me, Miss Mandeville?

Zor. No; I'm not in a vexing, teasing, and all that humour this morning. But are you sure of the truth of this story?

Miss Chat. Sure of it! Why, Mrs. Blab-all told it me, and I believe all she says to be gospel, for she has talked scandal to me every morning for this year and an half past, and in all that time never told the least bit of a lie. How kind of her! Wasn't it?

Lady

Lady Clara. Are you going, Mr. Walsingham? We dine at home; if you can put up with a family dinner—[*He bows, and exit with Beauchamp.*]—You'll be with me in the evening, Miss Chatterall?

Miss Chat. Oh! without fail; and I hope by that time to have collected authentic information concerning two elopements, four young men ruined at play, nine ladies of quality taken tripping with their footmen, and one who died of a cold which she caught in going to church. How comical! Wasn't it? Come, Modish?

[*Exit with Modish.*]

Lord List. Pray, Clara—What was I going to—Oh! Where does Mrs. Ormond live?

Lady Clara. I protest I've forgotten, but the porter can tell you. May I ask why you enquire?

Lord List. I've no sort of objection to your asking the question, provided you've none to my not answering it. Good morning, we shall meet at dinner; or perhaps not till to-morrow; or perhaps not this month; it does not signify, you know, if we never meet at all.

Lady Clara. Oh! not in the least—Good morning.

[*Exit Lord Listless.*]

Zor. I see Mr. Modish returning; shall I stay, or leave you to your usual discussions? Perhaps my presence may prevent—

Lady Clara. Oh! child, don't mind me: these little matrimonial rubs are excellent for the vapours, and Modish is never so entertaining as when I've put him out of temper.

Zor. I'm sure then he's entertaining very often, but I cannot admire your mode of making him so; and for my own part, I verily think that were I to live a thousand years, I could never succeed in extracting amusement from my husband's uneasiness,

sinefs, or find pleasure in being the torment of a man, whom I had sworn before the altar to love and to obey! [Exit.]

Enter MODISH.

Lady Clara. [humming an Italian air, opens Modish's letter thoughtlessly]—Lud! what am I doing! Beg your pardon, Modish, I've not read ten words upon my honour.

Mod. 'Twas of no consequence.

Lady Clara. Oh! it might have been from a lady, and I've no wish to pry into your secrets.

Mod. This letter comes from a relation, who after dissipating his fortune here went to India some eighteen years ago—Let me see what he says—'My dear cousin will be surprised to find, that a man still exists, whom I doubt not he has long numbered with the dead: Still more will it surprise you to know, that soon after my arrival in India, my union with a rich widow at once cleared me of debt, and placed me in a state of opulence.'

Lady Clara. Opulence? This grows interesting.

Mod. 'On my wife's death I realized my fortune, determined to share it with you, my dear Geo:ge.'

Lady Clara. The worthy man! Who waits? Send Slip-slop to me.—I'll have a chamber prepared this instant.

Mod. 'But fate was not yet weary of persecuting me; the vessel in which I had embarked my wealth was shipwrecked, and I regained the English shore, poor as I left it.'

Lady Clara. Then the money's lost?

Enter SLIP-SLOP.

Slip. Did your La'ship—

C

Lady

Lady Clara. It doesn't signify, Slip-slop.

[Exit Slip-slop.]

Mod. "To you then, my dear George, I must apply for assistance, and soon after receiving this you may expect a visit from your affectionate cousin and friend,
WILLIAM RIVERS."

Lady Clara. How unlucky! This money would have been so seasonable—

Mod. Seasonable, madam? Say, necessary, absolutely necessary; and what has made it so? Your dissipation, your extravagance, your—

Lady Clara. Oh! mercy, dear Modish, mercy! Moderate your tone; I beg; consider my nerves.

Mod. My manner, madam, may be moderate, but the matter must be harsh.

Lady Clara. Oh! sir, let but your voice be gentle, and as to the matter of what you say, I shan't mind it a straw.

Mod. What I say, madam, you never do mind.

Lady Clara. True, sir; I never do.

Mod. Madam, madam, I must say, and I will say—

Lady Clara. Say, sir? Lord, couldn't you sing? 'T would be much more agreeable.

Mod. Zounds, madam, I'm serious, and well I may be so. My affairs are so embarrassed that I expect an execution in the house every day, and but one way remains of preventing it. You must give up your diamonds, I'll procure you paste instead; and as you're known to possess real jewels, nobody will suspect those you wear to be false.

Lady Clara. Well, sir, I'll only mention one circumstance, and then if you still wish it, the diamonds are at your disposal.

Mod. [aside]—So readily? I'm amazed—

Well,

Well, my dear Lady Clara, and this circumstance is—

Lady Clara. Simply this. About three months ago I sold the real jewels, and those now in my possession are the paste *.

Mod. [*violently*].—Confusion! Fire, and Furies!

Lady Clara. Don't swear, sir!

Mod. Zounds! madam, I must and will swear, and I must and will tell you once for all—

Enter JOHN.

John. Mr. Rivers.

[*Exit.*

Mod. He has nicked the time: I never felt less charitably disposed in my life.—*Throws himself into a chair, his back turned to Lady Clara, who sits in an indolent posture, humming to herself.*

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. It is with diffidence, Sir, that I venture—

Lady Clara. Oh! Heavens! A black scratch! Drops! drops, or I shall faint!—[*Modish rings*]

Riv.—I fear, madam, I have by some means occasioned an alarm, which—

Enter SLIP-SLOP [*with drops.*]

Lady Clara. Quick! quick! or I expire.—[*After taking a smelling-bottle.*].—Slip-slop, tell the man, I beg his pardon, but I've always had a particular aversion to black scratches.

Slip. [*to Rivers*].—Sir, my Lady hopes you'll accuse her, but a black scratch always was her particular diversion.

Riv. I'm sorry to have offended, but 'tis the lot of misfortune to offend in every thing!

Mod. I—I think, Mr. Rivers, I've heard my father speak of you, but as to what he said, I really don't remember a syllable.

Riv. I fear, if you did, it could not prejudice you in my favour; yet as my conduct was only

C 2

imprudent;

* This was related to me as an anecdote.

imprudent, never dishonourable, your father's friendship was mine to the last.

Mod. Very possibly ; I don't dispute it.

Riv. Were he alive, I should not want a friend ! Let me, however, rejoice in his son's affluence. Your numerous retinue, your splendid mansion prove, that you've the ability to serve me, and your inclination I cannot doubt.

Mod. Why really—Hem !—Appearances are frequently deceitful and—and to say the truth—Pray, what may your plans be ?

Riv. They rest on you. As all hopes of independence are finally destroyed, I must rely on your good offices to obtain for me some small place, and being so near a relation, I think, I have some claim to your exertions.

Mod. Claim—Oh ! yes—certainly a claim—But really places are so difficult to obtain—

Lady Clara. Difficult ! I tried the other day without success to get my footman into the Custom-house ; so nothing can be done for you in that way.

Mod. However, sir, I'll look about me, and if any thing occurs will let you know. Good morning.

Riv. In the mean time may I without offence mention to you my distressed situation ? The gripping hand of poverty presses hard upon me ; I have no other support, have no one to look to but yourself.—Oh ! George, George, you once loved me ! Often have I carried you in my arms, often has my hand supplied you with money when a boy, and in all your little distresses it was from my partiality that you sought assistance ! Let these recollections, let the recollection of your excellent father plead for me, when I mention—that—that a trifling pecuniary aid will be of the most essential service.

Mod.

Mod. [*with emotion, aside to Lady Clara.*] I'll—I'll give him a ten pound note, and send him away.

Lady Clara. Ten pound? Heavens! Modish! don't be so extravagant.

Mod. Your Ladyship is always economical, when charity is in the case!

Lady Clara. [*with a sneer.*]—Oh! sir, you're partial to me!

Mod. If I am, dam'me!—[*resuming his cold manner.*] I'm very sorry, Mr. Rivers, it's out of my power to assist you at present, but if I hear of any thing to suit you, I'll let you know. Good morning.

Riv. But sir—

Mod. I'll move heaven and earth to serve you, Good morning.

Riv. But sir, if you don't know where I live, how can you inform me of your success?

Mod. Oh! true! where shall I send?

Riv. [*hesitating*]—I'm ashamed to name such a miserable—I—I lodge at the Three Blue Posts, in Little Britain.

Lady Clara. Oh! shocking! Is it possible that any body can live at the Three Blue Posts!

Mrs. Slip. Oh! dear no, my lady; it an't possible.

Riv. Before I go, sir, let me ask whether your sister Emily is still living.

Lady Clara. Oh! yes, but she can't assist you, so its useless applying to her. However, my porter can give you her direction.

Riv. Is she then in distress? I'll hasten to her, and though she may not give me relief for my wants, with her I may at least find sympathy for my woes, a sentiment which I have vainly sought for in the Palaces of the Great.—[*With stifled anger.*]—Good morning, sir.

Mod. Your servant.

Riv. [*aside.*] So fades my hope! On, how sandy a foundation do they build, who place their reliance on the friendship of affluence! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. So he's gone at last.

Mrs. Slip. And truly I'm glad of it! No wonder your La'ship was so flustered at seeing him; for when I first saw his odorous black scratch, I protest it threw me into such a constellation, that I thought I should have conspired upon the spot!

Lady Clara. Poor Slip-slop! Order the carriage to the door. [*Exit Slip-slop.*

Mod. Before you go, madam, I must say—

Lady Clara. My dear Mr. Modish, say not another word on the subject, since on one point I am decided; that whenever we are of different opinions, you must be wrong, and I must be right. Good morning. [*Exit.*

Mod. I've gained much by this conference! Bachelors! Bachelors! Tye yourselves up in the noose of hemp, rather than the noose of matrimony. The pain of the former is never felt after a few minutes; but the knot of the latter grows tighter every hour during years, and is at last only loosened by death or infamy! [*Exit.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

ZORAYDA'S Apartment.—She is discovered folding a Letter.

ZORAYDA.

'TIS done! Yes, Beauchamp, we part, and for ever! Yes, tell you so myself—No, no! I cannot! That painful task, I trust, this letter will induce Mrs. Ormond to undertake. What? Beauchamp's mistress? The mistress of a married man? Break, fond heart, break, but support such shame no longer! Hark!—He comes!—[Concealing the letter.]—

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Beau. Zorayda!—How, in tears, my love?

Zor. [assuming gaiety.]—Heed them not!—A mere trifle—My grief is already forgotten.

Beau. Indeed! Had your grief then so slight a cause?

Zor. Ah! while remorse and shame dwell here, can my cause for grief ever be slight?

Beau. Yet methinks in public your manner—

Zor. Is gay, is forced, is agonizing! Loth am I that the world should see that I suffer, since 'twas from you my sufferings sprung; but believe me, Beauchamp, the smiles which play on my cheek in public are to my heart as moon-beams falling on some rock of ice; they shine, but warm not!

Beau. Dearest Zorayda!—

Zor. Edward! Edward! Oh! where is my father? Perhaps now stretched on the bed of sickness, calling on Zorayda for those offices which a daughter alone can perform; and woe is me! calling in vain! Perhaps—, perhaps ere this cold in a foreign grave, where his heart has forgot at my

my name to burn with anger, or to glow with love, where Death has long since forbidden his lips to call on me, or curse me! Yet if he still *should* live—too surely, wretched Zorayda, he lives no longer for thee.

Beau. Zorayda, would you drive me mad?

Zor. And still no letters from India? Still no word from my father, or kind, or cruel? Oh that I could but know he still exists! that I could but once more see the characters of his hand! that I could but for one moment hear his voice, though in the next I again heard it curse me!

Beau. Nay, be comforted! A person just arrived from India, I trust, can give me some tidings of Mr. Mortimer, and having discharged my errand here, I hasten to him. You mentioned some trinkets which you wished to purchase; these notes will answer their price. And now, my love, farewell for the present: when next we meet, I hope to bring good tidings.

Zor. Heaven grant it! but to whom go you?

Beau. To a poor relation of Modish's, who applied to him for relief.

Zor. And he departed?—

Beau. Unrelieved.

Zor. Alas! Yet perhaps he was undeserving?

Beau. That I know not; but trust me, Zorayda, I love not those, who weigh too nicely the transgressions of a *sufferer*; to punish human errors is the province of Heaven; to relieve human wants is the duty of man!

Zor. True, true, dear Edward! and therefore cannot you—

Beau. You know, my means are circumscribed; what cash I could have spared, was already appropriated to your use.

Zor. To mine?—these notes?—And whither is he now gone?

Beau.

Beau. To Mrs. Ormond's, whose noble heart would willingly relieve him, but whose means—

Zor. And if she cannot—what must he do?

Beau. Starve, Zorayda!

Zor. He shall not! no, no, he shall not! Follow him! These notes—take them, take them all: haste to him with them: oh! haste, ere it be too late! Nay, oppose me not, dear Edward; in this I must not be opposed.

Beau. Oppose you, Zorayda? be my own heart hardened, when I defeat the generosity of yours! I haste with your present to Mrs. Ormond, and at the same time I trust I shall obtain some tidings of Mr. Mortimer.

Zor. To Mrs. Ormond? Stay! I will inclose the notes in this letter—*[sealing it]*—Give it her; it says—

Beau. What, my love?

Zor. *[after a pause]*—What I cannot! Leave me! 'Nay delay not! Leave me, I conjure you!

Beau. I obey!

[Exit.]

Zor. I cannot doubt that letter's effect; Mrs. Ormond will read my sad story with compassion, and stretch forth her hand to save from destruction a poor creature, whose guilt began in ignorance, whose knowledge of that guilt, but for her, must end in despair! She will convince Beauchamp, that 'tis necessary we should part: then will I hasten back to India, hasten to my dear, my cruel father: will throw me on his bosom, will cling round his knees, will clasp his hand till it dashes me on the ground, and then, if his feet trample me, will bathe them with my tears, kiss them, and die!

[Exit.]

SCENE

SCENE II.—Mrs. ORMOND'S.—*The Breakfast Table is set.*

Enter Mrs. ORMOND, followed by ANNE.

Mrs. Orm. Nay, Anne, it must be so; I must part with him.

Anne. Part with Frank? how will you manage that, madam? Why, you'll never persuade him to go.

Mrs. Orm. But he must; I can no longer afford to keep him.

Anne. For that very reason, he'll stay, madam. Oh! Frank will never go, I'm certain.

Mrs. Orm. Well, well, send him hither—[*Exit Anne. Mrs. Ormond looking at a letter which she holds*].—"will call this morning—Edward Beauchamp." I hope, then, my remonstrances have at length prevailed, and he sees his conduct to Zorayda in its proper light. Yet even then, how to persuade her to part from him—

Enter FRANK, places the Tea-Urn on the Table, and is going.

Mrs. Orm. Stay, Frank; I must speak with you.

Frank. I wait your orders, madam.

Mrs. Orm. I give them for the last time.

Frank. Madam!

Mrs. Orm. It grieves me to say it, my good fellow, but we must part.

Frank. Part Madam!—Part?

Mrs. Orm. Even so; but be assured, Frank, I shall always feel grateful for your fidelity, and should my fortunes ever change, you shall not be forgotten.—What is due to you?—[*taking out her purse.*]

Frank.

Frank. And you really turn me away?

Mrs. Orm. Turn you away? No, but I'm constrained to dismiss you.

Frank. Dismiss me?—Very well!—Do it!—But I won't go!

Mrs. Orm. Nay, but, Frank—

Frank. And you can be cruel enough to turn me away? In Mr. Ormond's family have I lived forty years, man and boy, and now all of a sudden you turn me a-drift! Ah! I see a fair face may hide an hard heart!

Mrs. Orm. But hear me, my good fellow! my circumstances demand retrenchment, and unable longer either to maintain or pay you—

Frank. I don't want to be paid! I don't want to be maintained! I ask but to see you every morning, and be assured you are in health; I ask but to see my young master grow up in the image of his father; carry him in my arms while he's a child, and when he's a man to die in his presence! I ask but this, and you refuse me! Yet you cannot surely be so cruel; you could never really mean to drive me away—*[kneeling]*—Dear good lady, comfort me, say you did this but to try me, say you never really meant to part with your poor and faithful Frank!

Mrs. Orm. *[affected.]*—Rise, rise, my good fellow!—Yes, you shall remain with me! Rather will I endure any inconvenience, than pain an heart so feeling!

Frank. Inconvenience? God bless you, madam, I shall rather relieve you than occasion any. I am yet strong and hearty; I can labour, can work my fingers to the bones in your service, and rather than you or yours should want wherewithal to eat, Lord forgive me if I wouldn't consent to your eating me!

[Exit.

Mrs. Orm. Noble heart!—I have heard servants

vants called the plagues of life ; but never did I pass more delightful moments than while listening to the effusions of this honest fellow's gratitude.

Re-enter FRANK, followed by RIVERS.

Frank. This way, sir !—A gentleman to wait on you, madam. [Exit.

Riv. When I left England, madam, you were so young that probably no trace remains in my cousin Emily's remembrance—

Mrs. Orm. Is it possible ? Surely, sir, I now speak to Mr. Rivers.

Riv. Even so, but if you recollect my story as well as my features, I fear you are not prejudiced in my favour : my juvenile follies—

Mrs. Orm. [*eagerly.*—Sir, my father loved you ; his friends can never be judged harshly by me. But pray inform me, I fear your expedition to the East—

Riv. The East, my dear lady, was sufficiently kind ; but, on my return, a tempest swept in one moment away the gains of eighteen painful years.

Mrs. Orm. I feel for your disappointment ; but ere we proceed, may I not offer you some breakfast ? I am rather an invalid, and *rose* late to-day.

Riv. Were it not an intrusion—

Mrs. Orm. Intrusion ? Oh ! my good sir ; to meet with one whom my father loved, and who loved my father, is to me a delight so exquisite, and which now, alas ! I enjoy so rarely ! Nay, be seated ; I must not be denied.

Riv. What a contrast ! [*aside*—I fear you will think me impertinent, yet I must hazard one enquiry. How comes it that your situation differs from your brother's so strangely ?

Mrs. Orm. Oh ! at my first entrance into life, my establishment was not less splendid, but my husband's

husband's nature, generous and benevolent to excess, ultimately proved our ruin. He was compelled to part with his estate, and we retired to an humble retreat, where my beloved Ormond expired.

Riv. But still your jointure—

Mrs. Orm. Satisfied my husband's creditors, nor till I felt it, could I believe, that so much pleasure could be purchased by a sacrifice so trifling.

Riv. [*aside*].—An angel, by Jupiter!

Mrs. Orm. This avowal must excuse my not offering you that assistance, which I should afford you most willingly; but doubtless on applying to my brother—

Riv. I have applied.

Mrs. Orm. And the result was—

Riv. Coldness and scorn!

Mrs. Orm. Indeed?—Oh George!—Well, well, we will not despond: In my poverty, I have still some friends, I trust, both able and willing to oblige me. To these will I recommend you, and till they succeed in serving you, take a lodging near mine; my table shall be always open to you; and as you may already have contracted some little debts, pray make use of this trifle to discharge them. If not sufficient, only say it, and the sum shall be increased.

Riv. Madam! Cousin! Emily! Nay, now my heart must burst!

Mrs. Orm. Let not such a trifle—

Riv. Forgive me! Dearest Emily, forgive me! Here—take it, take it, and Heaven make you as happy with it as you deserve to be.—[*Giving her a pocket-book.*]

Mrs. Orm. How? Notes? and to a large amount! What can this mean?

Riv. It means, that I deserve to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, for giving one moment's

uneasiness to such an heart. I am rich, Emily, rich—Yet I lyè, for all that was mine is now yours.

Mrs.Orm. Amazement! Can this be real?

Riv. A few hours shall convince you of its truth, nor can you feel better pleased to be heiress of my riches, than I feel at finding an heiress who deserves them. But I must away and begin my preparations, for by six o'clock you must be lodged in your own house, attended by your own servants, and ready to welcome me at your own table.

Mrs.Orm. But, dear sir, this great haste—

Riv. Oh! hang delay; what I do, I do at once, and so farewell for the present.—[*Going.*]

Mrs.Orm. But at least take back these notes; their value—

Riv. Is trifling when compared with that of your present! [*kissing it.*] But never—no, while I have life never will I part with this note! I'll wear it next my heart as a talisman, for you gave it when you could full ill afford it, and gave it too from the noblest of motives, compassion for the distressed, and respect for the memory of a father! [*Exit.*]

Mrs.Orm. This event so unexpected, so sudden—Now then I can look forward once more without anxiety. Oh! from what a weight is my bosom relieved!—William—my dear, my darling William—thy prospects are bright again!—While she clasps thee to her bosom, thy mother shall tremble no more for thy future fate; and want shall no longer compel her to restrain the openness of thy liberal mind, or blame the benevolence of thy little feeling heart. My faithful servants too—How! Lord Listless?

Enter

Enter Lord LISTLESS.

Lord List. Even he. But you seem surpris'd at my visit: when you know its purport, I think, my dear Mrs. Ormond, you'll not be sorry to see me.

Mrs. Orm. [*coldly.*] Lady Clara, I suppose—

Lord List. No, Clara's quite out of the question; the thought's entirely my own, I'll assure you; but don't let your joy overpower you.

Mrs. Orm. My joy!

Lord List. Yes; for you must know, my dear creature, I am in love with you.

Mrs. Orm. You, my Lord? You?

Lord List. To distraction, 'pon my soul!

[*carelessly.*]

Mrs. Orm. I can scarcely credit my hearing.

Lord List. And here I am for the express purpose of making you proposals.

Mrs. Orm. I protest I'm so surpris'd—

Lord List. I've ordered my lawyer to draw up an handsome settlement; and as these apartments are but *La, La*, you had better remove to my house immediately.—*La Fleur*, my carriage!—Will you come?

Mrs. Orm. The coxcomb! [*aside*] My Lord, I must be candid with you. Considering our situations, I know the world will blame me for not accepting your proposals; but could I so easily forget Mr. Ormond's loss, I must frankly own that your Lordship is by no means the man whom I think likely to make me happy in a second marriage.

Lord List. Marriage! my dear creature, who said a word on the subject? Nothing could be farther from my thoughts, for I think marriage a great bore; Don't you? Now, what I meant was that sort of amicable arrangement, which,

when we grow tired of each other, (as I doubt not we soon shall,) may leave both at liberty to pursue our separate inclinations. Thus stands the case: You are poor, I am rich; you are handsome, so am I. Despise then the opinions of prudes and cynics, and sharing a splendid establishment with love and me—[*yawning.*]

Mrs. Orm. Beyond a doubt must be perfectly enchanting!—[*Aside*] Insolent coxcomb! Yet he's so absurd that anger here would be ridiculous.

Lord List. Yes, I thought you'd like the proposal. Nay, I should have flown to you with it upon the wings of love a month ago, if something or other hadn't continually, driven it out of my head; and if my valet hadn't put me in mind of it this morning, 'pon my soul I believe I shouldn't have remembered it at all.

Mrs. Orm. It were better, my Lord, that you never had, for I cannot hold your insolent offers in greater contempt than I do their proposer. After this declaration you must be convinced that your presence here cannot be acceptable. [*Going.*]

Lord List. Nonsense! Come, come, don't be silly, child! My carriage is at the door, and I must positively take you away with me.

Mrs. Orm. Unhand me, my Lord!

Lord List. Ten thousand pardons! I forgot; you are a prude, and a little gentle force is necessary to quiet your scruples.

Mrs. Orm. My Lord!——I beg——I entreat you——

Lord List. Now, why the devil give me all this trouble? Nay, come you must, 'pon my soul!

Mrs. Orm. Nay then——Frank!—Frank, I say!—Help! help!

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Beau. [Seizing Lord Listless, and disengaging Mrs. Ormond, who sinks into a chair.] Rascal! how

how dare you——Hey, the devil? Lord Listless!
And what brings your Lordship here?

Lord List. Poh, Beauchamp! 'tis a mere joke.
Mrs. Ormond was alarmed without reason, and
thought proper——

Beau. Without reason? I doubt it not; I be-
lieve no one has much to fear from your Lord-
ship.

Lord List. I don't understand that sneer, but
the immediate enforcement of your bond shall con-
vince you that you, sir, at least have something
to fear from me. This will be merely a proper
mode of punishing your present conduct, which
I cannot but consider as ungrateful in the extreme
—and 'pon my soul I should be in a confounded
passion, if being angry were not too great an ex-
ercise for a man of fashion. *[Exit.]*

Beau. Mean coxcomb! Mrs. Ormond, I fear
your agitation——

Mrs. Orm. Oh! a fit of tears has relieved me;
but how can I sufficiently thank you for your in-
terference?

Beau. By accepting without scruple this from
Zorayda. *[Giving a packet.]*

Mrs. Orm. And its contents are——

Beau. Hearing that Mr. Rivers meant to apply
to you for assistance, and fearing lest your ability
to relieve him should not square with your incli-
nation, she readily sacrificed some jewels, which
she had long been anxious to possess, and appro-
priated the money to the alleviation of his dis-
tresses.

Mrs. Orm. Noble Girl! and while such is her
conduct, how, Col. Beauchamp, how can you
justify your own, either to her or yourself?

Beau. Justify it, I cannot. Yet surely cir-
cumstances may in some measure extenuate its im-
propriety.

propriety. The woman's character, who, for my sins, calls me her husband——

Mrs.Orm. That woman, be she what she may, is still your wife, Colonel Beauchamp, nor are her faults any apology for yours. I may pity you for being united to such a woman ; but while she exists, I must blame your attachment to any other.

Beau. Well then, my fair moralist, shew that pity by counselling my future conduct. What should I do !

Mrs.Orm. Can you ask me ? Restore Zorayda to virtue and her father.

Beau. On one condition you shall be obeyed. A report, which seems well authenticated, has reached me, that many months has past since my wife expired at Turin. For that place I mean instantly to set out, anxious to ascertain the fact, which, if true, leaves me at liberty to repair my injuries to Zorayda : and if false——

Mrs.Orm. You will then be guided by me ?

Beau. There is my hand ; on my honour, I will.

Mrs.Orm. I accept then your conditions.——
When mean you to set out for Turin ?

Beau. I am impatient to be gone ; yet how to tell Zorayda that I must leave her——

Mrs.Orm. Be that my care.

Beau. Dear Mrs.Ormond, would you but undertake that painful task, would you explain to her the object of my journey to Turin, and, should it prove successful, strive to reconcile her to the cruel alternative——

Mrs.Orm. All this shall be done, though not exactly by me ; situated as I am with Lady Clara, I cannot go myself to her house uninvited ; but I think Mr. Rivers may without impropriety, under the

the pretext of returning to her this now unnecessary present.

Beau. Unnecessary! Have his wants then been already relieved?

Mrs. Orm. They needed no relief; Rivers is wealthy, and the object of his visit to Lady Clara's this morning was to make an experiment on her heart, not her purse. Zorayda's gift, therefore, being now superfluous, I will persuade Rivers to return it to her himself; and while expressing his gratitude for her well-intended benevolence, he may take an opportunity of convincing her that your absence is necessary, that Lady Clara's is by no means a proper abode for her, and he shall press her, 'till the result of your inquiries shall have determined her future conduct, to accept an asylum in my house.

Beau. And will you, Mrs. Ormond, will you hazard your reputation, and subject yourself to the world's censure, by affording protection and support to an unfortunate, whose errors—

Mrs. Orm. Hush! hush! No more of this. You accept then my proposal?

Beau. With transport! But by heaven you are an angel! Oh, Mrs. Ormond! did all your sex think like you—would Chastity stretch forth her hand to assist the penitent, nor raise it to plunge her deeper—many a poor victim of imprudence now struggling with the billows might easily regain the shore!—But when some unhappy girl has made the first false step, branded with shame, abandoned by her former friends, courted by vice, and shunned by virtue, no wonder that she flies from remorse to the arms of luxury, and purchases a momentary oblivion of her sorrows by a repetition of the fault which caused them.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment elegantly furnished.*

Mrs. ORMOND and RIVERS are seated near a Table, on which is Desert, &c.

RIVERS.

WELL, well, your commission is a delicate one, and I doubt much my executing it to your satisfaction; but however I'll do my best. Beauchamp, you say, is the villain's name, who—

Mrs. Orm. It is, but guilty as he is in the present instance, justice compels me to say, that by no other act has he ever merited the name of villain.

Riv. By my soul, this one is quite sufficient! The married seducer of an unsuspecting girl, the selfish betrayer of a father's confidence! Oh! he's qualified to take the degree of villain in any college of vice throughout the universe.

Mrs. Orm. Thus severe upon Beauchamp, how can Miss Mandeville's errors hope from you that indulgence—

Riv. Surely the case is widely different: besides, her generosity has interested me sincerely in her behalf. This you say is the packet which I am to return to her?—Mandeville?—I don't recollect any person of that name in India; but no matter: Whoever her father may be, if he really loves his daughter, heartily shall I rejoice to relieve the poor man from suffering what I once felt so keenly myself!

Mrs. Orm. Yourself?

Riv. Emily, it was my misfortune to have a daughter on whom my soul doated. Her mother died while my child was yet an infant, and my child

child was the image of that mother, was the delight of my eye, was the comfort of my heart, was the solitary blessing of my existence; and while that one blessing was mine, I thought I possessed every other! This daughter, this very idolized daughter, sacrificed to passion *her* honour and *my* love, abandoned me for a villain, and her father became childless!

Mrs.Orm. Is she then dead?

Riv. To me for ever! She fled from India, doubtless with the perfidious Dorimont; and what has since become of her, I know not. But be she where she may, the ungrateful is no more my daughter.

Mrs.Orm. Yet were she now stretched in penitence at your feet—

Riv. Stretched in her coffin I might forgive her, else never!

Mrs.Orm. Oh! Mr. Rivers—

Riv. Nay, speak of her no more. I have sworn never to pardon her; that oath will I keep religiously, and seek that happiness, my dear cousin, in your family, which the ungrateful fugitive has banished for ever from my own! [*Exit.*]

Mrs.Orm. Either Mr. Rivers deceives himself, or the difference must be strange between a father's and a mother's feelings! Yes, my loved William, should'st *thou* prove unworthy my regard, I think my heart would break with grief; but till it *did* break, never, oh! surely never, would it feel one spark of less affection for thee!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room at Lady Clara's.—Another is seen through Folding-Doors.*

Enter Lord LISTLESS and MODISH.

Lord List. A peer and a man of fashion lend money? Mad! Positively mad, dear Modish, or such

such an idea could never have entered your head!

Mod. Is it so strange, then to expect assistance from a brother?

Lord List. No, but uncommonly strange to expect money from a man of fashion.

Mod. Absurd, when the largeness of your income—

Lord List. Is absolutely necessary for the largeness of my expenditure. 'Pon my soul, my dear fellow, I could almost imagine, that you have quite forgotten how absolutely necessary it is for a man in my situation to keep up a certain style; to have horses he never rides, houses he never inhabits, and mistresses he scarcely knows by sight. In short, these unnecessary necessities are so innumerable, that I'm myself much straitened in my circumstances, and mean to insist immediately upon the payment of Beauchamp's bond.

Mod. How, Lord Listless! That bond, which it is well known your father never intended to— But this is foreign to the subject. Will you oblige me with the sum I mentioned?

Lord List. I can't, 'pon my soul!

Mod. Say rather, you *won't*; I shall be better pleased.

Lord List. Shall you?—Then I won't, 'pon my soul!

Mod. I've done. If you can justify yourself this conduct towards so near a relation as Lady Clara, and a man whom you called your friend—

Lord List. Friends? Relations? Ridiculous! My dear Modish, you surely forget that I'm a citizen of the world, an universal philanthropist. The poor are my relations, the unfortunate are my friends; and as to my natural friends and relations, I don't care that for them all put together, 'pon my soul!—[snapping his fingers]

[Exit
Mod.

Mod. Contemptible! Yet how dare I arraign his conduct, when I remember how little did compassion I way my own this morning to poor Rivers!

Enter JOHN.

John. Here's a sad job, sir! The porter has let in the old usurer.

Mod. Who? The usurer? What, Squeez'em?

John. The same, sir.

Mod. The Devil! Yet I dare not refuse to see him. Show him up. [*Exit John.*] No doubt he comes for money, but I must endeavour to beat him off as civilly as I can.

JOHN introduces SQUEEZ'EM.

Mod. Good Good, is it you, my dear Mr. Squeez'em? I'm charmed beyond measure to see you! Why, you look charmingly, charming y I protest!

Squeez. You're mighty good to say so, sir. I made bold to call—

Mod. I'm extremely glad you did, - for I was just wondering why I hadn't seen you for so long; and why don't you call oftener? I'm happy at all times to see my best friend, Mr. Squeez'em.

Squeez. I am much flattered by your kindness, sir—There is a—

Mod. I beg you'll be seated. John, a chair for Mr. Squeez'em.

Squeez. It's quite unnecessary, for I only—

Mod. I must insist upon it. My good friend, sit yourself down, I entreat you.—[*They sit.*] And now tell me, how are your children? All well, I hope? No meazles? No hooping-cough! No—

Squeez. None, sir, none, I thank you; but there is a little—

Mod. A little one coming is there? I beg I may stand god-father.

Squeez.

Squeez. Lord! sir, you mistake; I'd only—

Mod. Why, isn't dear Mrs. Squeez'em likely to—

Squeez. Dear Mrs. Squeez'em has nothing at all to do with what I'm come about. To be plain with you, Mr. Modish, there is a little affair, which—

Mod. A little affair? Oh! you fly rogue! What, which must be a secret between you and me? Well, well, I promise you, Mrs. Squeez'em shan't hear a word of it. And so the little girl is pretty, is she?

Squeez. Lord, sir, I can't get you to hear me out; and I've walked here all the way from St. Mary Axe on purpose to—

Mod. Walked here? What, all that way? Then pray take some refreshment, for I'm sure you must be fatigued. Here John, tea, coffee—or perhaps you'd prefer a glass of wine? Only say what you like, and—

Squeez. Dear sir, there's nothing I should like so much at present as to have you listen to what I want to say.

Mod. Surely, surely; you won't take any refreshment then?

Squeez. None, I thank you, sir; I'm in a hurry to return home, and only wish to ask—

Mod. In an hurry to return home? Then for Heaven's sake don't let me detain you. Here, John, light Mr. Squeez'em down stairs.

Squeez. Sir, I only want to—

Mod. To get home, I know it. Good night.

Squeez. I should be glad to—

Mod. To go; pray suit your own convenience, but I'm greatly obliged to you for this call. Chatting away an hour with a friend, and be assured,

sured, that I shall always be delighted to serve you to the very utmost extent of my ability.

[*Exeunt Squeeze'm and John**.]

Mod. So! He's gone, and now I can breathe again; but I must rejoin my company, lest the cause of my absence should be suspected. With a mind thus ill at ease, how tormenting is it to assume the appearance of content, and mingle in the irksome gaiety of the happy and unthinking.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Miss CHATTERALL and SLIP-SLOP.

Miss Chat. Let Lady Clara know that I'm here, and have something to say to her of importance.

[*Exit Slip-slop.*]

Enter WALSINGHAM.

Miss Chat. Oh! Lord, Mr. Walsingham!

Wal. Oh! Lord, Miss Chatterall!

Miss Chat. I've got such a story to tell you.

Wal. "A story to tell?" I dare say you have.

Miss Chat. Do you know Miss Bloomly?

Wal. Only by character.

Miss Chat. Then you know the worst of her, for her character's monstrous shocking, that's the truth on't. But would you believe it, she's crooked! How comical, an't it?

Wal. Crooked? Impossible.

Miss Chat. Oh! but I assure you it's true, for her most intimate friend told me so just now with her own mouth.

Wal. Her friend! A pretty sort of a friend, by my honour! Before I'd have such friends—

Miss Chat. Nay but, Mr. Walsingham, there was no harm in telling it to me, for she knew very well it would go no further.

* This scene was suggested by that of *Monsieur Dimanche* in Molière's "*Festin de Pierre*."

Wal. Did she? Then I pronounce her a most learned lady, for she knows what no other person in London does, man, woman, or child.

Miss Chat. Well, but now don't repeat this story I beg, for nobody else knows it, and I only mean to tell it to Lady Clara, and a few particular friends, under a profound promise of secrecy.

Wal. There you are quite right, for whenever you wish a malicious report to circulate, you should always relate it as an inviolable secret.— People of fashion hear so much scandal daily, that one's own particular lye is frequently huddled in the crowd, and perhaps totally forgotten; but tell a fine lady a scandalous anecdote under a promise of secrecy, and I'll be bound that she pops it out within five minutes after. [Exit.

Miss Chat. I declare now, he doesn't believe a word of it, and that's monstrous provoking! However, I hope it will still serve to break off Miss Bloomly's marriage with young Flash.— Well, I protest I can't conceive how it is that every body contrives to get married except myself! I'm sure I do all in my power; grudge no expence in fans, feathers, cold cream, pearl powder, and bloom of oriental lilies; and it was but last week that I paid the Lord knows what for a new pair of the very best arched eye-brows! Yet all won't do, and I'm sure it's—it's *curst* provoking, so it is!

Enter ZORAYDA.

Miss Chat. Oh! Miss Mandeville, do you know—

Zor. Alas! Yes, Miss Chatterall, I know it but too well!

Miss Chat. Do you? Oh! Gemini! who could have told you?

Zor. The town talks of nothing else; at first indeed I would'nt believe the story; but the red-
ness

ness of your eyes proves it to be but too well-founded.

Miss Chat. My eyes? Dear, what can your mean?

Zor. I'm sure I pity you sincerely, but how could you be so imprudent? How could you think of going in your own carriage to the place where your little boys are nursed?

Miss Chat. My little boys?

Zor. Nay, it's too late to pretend ignorance; I know the story but too well!

Miss Chat. Do you? Then pray let me know it too; for let me die if this isn't the first word I ever heard of it.

Zor. Nay, this is carrying the jest too far, since every body knows you were married in St. Martin's Church to a Serjeant of the Guards, of the name of Brazen, on the 17th of last June, at seven and thirty minutes past eleven, odd seconds; and that you have at this moment two fine little boys at nurse with Mrs. Mum, No. 9, Paradise Row, three doors from the Red Lamps and green Railing. Why, dear me, every body knows it as well as I do!

Miss Chat. Oh! Mercy! What, I marry a Serjeant in the Guards! I have fine little boys! I visit a vulgar Mrs. Mum! Oh! horrid! Oh! monstrous!

Zor. Really, Mrs. Brazen—

Miss Chat. Don't call me Mrs. Brazen! I won't be called Mrs. Brazen!

Zor. Nay, 'tis a disagreeable situation, I own, and I declare I pity you extremely.

Miss Chat. Don't pity me, Miss! I won't bear to be pitied! There's not a syllable of truth in the story, and I'm surpris'd you could believe such a thing.

Zor. Oh! but I had it from your friend Mrs.

Blab-all, and she, you know—"has talked scandal to you for this year and an half past, and never told you the least bit of a lye in all that time!"

Miss Chat. Mrs. Blab-all? a malicious creature! But I always thought her a very bad woman! I'll go this moment and tell her—But even if this story *were* true, I don't understand, Miss, why you should talk to me about it of all people in the world!

Zor. Dear! I thought talking over the subject would console you! Did not you go this morning to Lady Cogwell, on purpose to talk over the story of her cheating?

Miss Chat. Yes, but I did *that* merely to teise her.

Zor. Did you? Then I vow and protest, that's the very reason why *I* did *this*.

Miss Chat. Indeed? Then let me tell you, Miss—

Zor. Come, Miss Chatterall, even make yourself easy. After all this story of the footman is simply an experiment of mine, intended to ascertain how you would bear being the heroine of such an anecdote, as I have frequently heard you relate of others; and I trust it will convince you, that murdering characters is not an amusement quite so harmless as you and your acquaintance seem to think it.

Miss Chat. Very well, Miss! Very Well! But since you think proper to take such liberties with—

Zor. Nay, nay, either be calm, or excuse my leaving you, since if the storm must rage, I prefer infinitely hearing it at a distance.

BALLAD.

BALLAD.—[*Cease, Rude Boreas.*]

STILL this tempest wildly raging,

Lift, fair Lady, lift to me;

Let my prayers your wrath assuaging,

Calm your bosom's stormy sea!

Anger now would sure be silly,

Nothing should your peace destroy;

While you think on little Billy,

Serjeant Brazen's own sweet boy!

[*Exit.*]

Miss Chat. A saucy chit! I protest she has so flurried me, that I dare say just now I look as hideous as herself! And here's somebody coming too!—I'll step into the next room, and settle myself before the glass. [*Retires.*]

Enter JOHN followed by RIVERS.

Riv. Say to Miss Mandeville that a gentleman has a message to her from Mrs. Ormond.—[*Exit John*].—I feel not a little embarrassed at entering upon a business so delicate. How the Deuce shall I open the conversation? Nay, there's no time for reflection, for here comes the lady.

Miss Chat. [*advancing, and looking at him through her glass.*].—Um! a stranger! And really a personable man. I'll accost him. If you wish, sir, to see Lady Clara—

Riv. No, madam; my business is with you. My name is Rivers, and I come here authorised by Colonel Beauchamp, to converse with you on a very delicate subject.—[*Aside*].—Well, hang me if I see an atom of the youth and beauty which Mrs. Ormond praised so highly!

Miss Chat. By Beauchamp, did you say, sir? By Colonel Beauchamp?

Riv. You seem surprised, madam; but suffer me to say, that Beauchamp's attachment to you—

Miss Chat. Attachment to me? I'm sure, if he ever had any, he kept it a profound secret.

Riv. Ah! madam, you flatter yourself! In spite of his precautions, that secret is now so well known, that things can no longer remain as they are, and some change in your situation ought to take place as soon as possible. I trust, madam, you are of my opinion.

Miss Chat. Why really, sir—to say the truth—I can't deny that I *am* rather of your way of thinking. But as Col. Beauchamp has a wife—

Riv. That wife, he has great reason to believe, exists no longer.

Miss Chat. [*looking pleased.*] Indeed? Dear sir, that quite alters the case, you know!

Riv. It does; and should this event be ascertained, his hand will immediately be offered, where his heart has long been given.—[*Aside*].—Well, there is certainly no accounting for tastes!

Miss Chat. Lord, sir! Dear sir!—[*Aside*.] Thank heaven then I *shall* be married after all!

Riv. But should Mrs. Beauchamp still be living—

Miss Chat. [*sighing.*] Then, sir, there's an end of the whole business!

Riv. True, madam, and I rejoice that you feel the necessity: It relieves me from the most embarrassing part of my commission, and emboldens me to say, without further ceremony, that in case of your not marrying Beauchamp, all your friends think it right that you should set off immediately for India.

Miss Chat. For India! Lord, sir, what should I do there? Why must I needs be packed off to India, because I can't marry Colonel Beauchamp?

Riv. My dear madam, 'tis absolutely necessary, and till you set sail, Mrs. Ormond requests you to accept an asylum in her house. At first indeed she had some scruples at engaging in an affair so delicate; but as she is confident that Col. Beauchamp

champ is the only person who has ever been particular to you—

Miss Chat. [*tossing her head.*] Indeed, Sir? Upon my word then she's very much mistaken. A great many people have been much more particular than Colonel Beauchamp, I can assure you.

Riv. How! a great many?

Miss Chat. Yes, sir: Fifty at least.

Riv. Zounds! madam, fifty?

Miss Chat. Bless me, sir, what is there so strange in that? Why if I don't marry for a year, I dare say there'll be fifty more.

Riv. The devil there will! Then, madam, you're going to India—

Miss Chat. I'd as soon go to the moon, sir! What, leave London, dear London, and the gay world, the dear gay world! The very thought on't is quite odious and execrable, and all that sir, an't it?

Riv. But, madam, madam, should your marriage not take place, can you think it proper that Beauchamp's attachment to you should last?

Miss Chat. No, to be sure I don't. In that case he'll go *his* way, I mine, till either he has got rid of his matrimonial clog, or I found some other lover as much to my liking. That's all, sir.

Riv. Fire and furies! what depravity! [*aside*] Your grief then for his loss wouldn't prevent—

Miss Chat. Lord, no, sir! why should it? The man is certainly well enough for a man; but if he breaks with me, I don't despair of finding as good to supply his place.

Riv. By heaven this is too much! Hear me, lost unhappy creature!

Miss Chat. Oh! Lord bless me, what's the matter?

Riv. Are you then indeed so dead to shame—
But

But I abandon you to the sorrows which cannot fail to arise from principles so depraved !

Miss Chat. How ? What ? Sir, how do you dare—

Riv. Yet I thank you for not preserving the mask before me. I can now open Mrs. Ormond's eyes, and shall insist upon her taking no further notice of a woman, who has not only broken down the pale of virtue, but who glories in the breach ! Oh ! fie upon you !

Miss Chat. I ?—I ?—Oh ! monstrous !——
[*Ringing the bell violently.*] Who waits there ?
Lady Clara ! Mr. Modith ! where are you, Mr. Modith ? Oh I shall burst with rage ! [*throwing herself into a chair.*]

Enter Lady CLARA.

Lady Clara. For heaven's sake, why is all this noise ?

Miss Chat. [*sobbing.*] Oh ! Lady Clara, I've been so shocked and insulted by that odious man ! He has said such things ! How quizzical, an't it ?

Lady Clara. Mr. Rivers here again ?

Riv. Even *He* ; but I shall intrude upon your Ladyship no longer than while I return this packet to Miss Mandeville, and with it my thanks : It grieves me that I cannot praise her other qualities as highly as her generosity.

Miss Chat. Miss Mandeville ? Nay then I'll see—[*opening the packet.*]

Lady Clara. I'm amazed at you, Mr. Rivers ! what you can mean by this conduct—

Riv. A time may come, when your Ladyship may not be perfectly satisfied with your own ; but however great may then be your contrition, remember, that I now bid you an eternal farewell !
[*Going, he meets Beauchamp, and starts back.*]
Dorimant, by Heaven !

Beau.

Beau. Ha ! Mortimer here !

Riv. [*seizing him.*] Where is my child ? What place conceals her ? Answer, or I spurn you at my foot !

Lady Clara. Bless me, Beauchamp, what means—

Riv. Beauchamp ! Ha ! then my poor girl is already abandoned, abandoned for yon coquette ! But this is no place for—You shall hear from me soon, sir ; and till he does hear from me, sit thou heavy on my soul, curse of a distracted father !

[*Exit.*]

Lady Clara. Why, what can the fellow !

Beau. Oh ! Lady Clara, I shall go mad ! 'Tis Mortimer, 'tis the rich East Indian, who—

Lady Clara. Lord, no ! That is Rivers, our poor relation, who—

Beau. Oh ! no, no, no ! I know him but too well ! But why do I linger here ? I'll follow him, or either perish by his hand, or obtain from him Zorayda's pardon !

Lady Clara. Mortimer ? I protest, I'm frightened out of my senses !

Miss Chat. [*reading.*] “ Unfortunate attachment ”—“ ignorance of the world ”—“ Beauchamp ”—“ my father ”—“ fled from India. ”—So ! the whole story of Miss Mandeville's seduction, and consequent embarrassments, in her own hand ! I think I shall now be even with her, for I'll to the printer's with this letter immediately.

Enter MODISH.

Mod. Whither now, Miss Chatterall ?

Miss Chat. Oh ! I can't stop a moment.—Look, sir, look ; a letter of Miss Mandeville's, and to morrow's newspaper shall serve it up at every fashionable breakfast-table in town, where “ Philanthropos ” shall cry out shame upon her !

her! "an indignant observer" pull her to pieces without mercy, and, while one paper torments her with "gentle hints," another shall pester her to death with friendly remonstrances." Your servant, Sir. [Exit.

Mod. A letter of Zorayda's! What can the spiteful creature mean? Ha! Lady Clara, you seem agitated?

Lady Clara. Something has happened, which—But I'll know the truth of it this moment.

Enter SLIP-SLOP.

Lady Clara. Slip-slop, let one of Mrs. Ormond's servants be sent for instantly.

Slip. Frank is below, my Lady; but, begging your pardon, I think he's a little intoxicated with liquor.

Lady Clara. No matter, send him hither.

[Exit Slip-slop.

Mod. But what can possibly—

Lady Clara. You shall know all presently.—Oh! here he comes.

Frank. [entering half drunk, with Slip-slop.] Huzza! the East-Indian for ever! huzza!

Mrs. Slip. Hush, hush, Frank! None of these exhalations! Don't you see—

Lady Clara. Come nearer, Frank. Pray does your Lady know Mr. Rivers?

Frank. Know him! Aye, that she does, Heaven bless him! By your asking, I suppose, by this time your Ladyship knows him too! Nay he did take you in finely, that's the truth on't.

Lady Clara. The fellow's drunk.

Frank. No, ma'am, Mrs. Slip-slop's not drunk; that's not it. But upon my soul, ma'am, I can't tell you the story properly if you keep turning round and round in that comical manner.

Mod. Took her in, say you?

Frank.

Frank. Yes, and your honour too, saving your presence. Why he's the great rich monstracious nabob, Mortimer! He's the East-Indian! Huzza! the East-Indian for—

Mod. How! Mortimer?

Lady Clara. And——and is he so very rich?

Frank. Oh! not so very rich. His servant, indeed, Mr. Yambo-Zing, assured me he had brought over whole bushels of godas, and pecks of blue peas! But, for all his boasting, I don't believe he's worth above two or three millions at most.

Lady Clara. Millions? oh mercy!

Mod. Confusion!

Frank. But honest Frank, says he, all I have is your Lady's. Oh! that made me mortal happy! And then, says he, honest Frank, Lady Clara shan't have a farthing on't. Oh! that made me a mortal deal happier! Huzza! huzza! The East-Indian for ever! Huzza! [Exit.

Mod. See, Madam, see what your insensibility has thrown away.

Lady Clara. My insensibility, sir! oh monstrous! I whose nerves are so delicate, whose sentiments are so refined, that——

Mod. Madam, madam, the fault is your's. I pitied Rivers's distress, and should have relieved it had not you——

Lady Clara. Lord, sir, what would you have had me do? I'm sure I made the best guess I could, and would have given the man any thing in the world had I only known that he wanted nothing.

Mod. Madam, madam, you have committed the fault—you must repair it. Go this moment to my sister's, entreat her to intercede for us with Mr. Rivers, and either bring home his pardon or never hope for mine. [Exit.

Lady

Lady Clara. Yes, I must go. Slip-slop, my cloak!—Such a princely fortune lost!—I remember now to have heard of Mortimer's immense wealth; and perhaps at the very moment he pleaded for half-a-crown, his pockets were stuffed with pearls and diamonds; and I warrant his odious black scratch periwig had been papiloted with bank-notes!—Oh! I could go distracted.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

SCENE II.—Mrs. ORMOND'S.

Enter Mrs. ORMOND and RIVERS.

Mrs. ORMOND.

MISS Mandeville's manners coarse, and her person disagreeable?

Riv. Upon my word I thought so: but I've been so long absent from the fashionable circles, that possibly she may be the general taste; I'm only certain that she's not at all to mine.

Mrs. Orm. And when you spoke of her return to India——

Riv. Oh! she could not endure the very mention of it. I was really afraid she'd have gone into hysterics.

Mrs. Orm. Strange! But, however, I'll ascertain the fact to-morrow, and this mystery shall be explained.

Riv. 'Till then let the matter rest. And now, my [dear Emily—[*A knocking without.*] Hey! what can be the meaning of that thundering rap?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lady Clara Modish.

Riv. Lady Clara Devil! and I'd rather meet the latter. Which way is she coming up?

Serv. This way.

[*Exit*

Riv. Then I'll go down the other.

Mrs. Orm. Oh! pray stay.

Riv. No, no; I'm not yet cool enough to conceal from the woman how heartily I despise her.

Mrs. Orm. Yet perhaps her neglect of you—

Riv. I guess what you would say, my good Emily. A moment of ill humour, a dish of

tea too strong, a bad run of luck last night, the indisposition of her lap-dog, or any other fine-lady-like affliction, might occasion her indifference to *my* distress—but that she could see the infant graces of your child without interest, that she could suffer without compassion an heart like yours to languish in poverty, betrays and insensibility which I never can forgive. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Orm. You must though, my dear sir, or your heart is composed of tougher materials than I imagine. Yes, yes, Rivers and my brother must be friends, and probably that brings Lady Clara hither. So, here she comes!

Servant shows in Lady Clara, and exit.

Lady Clara. My dear Mrs. Ormond, I've just hurried hither for one instant!—Why, they tell me you've been indisposed. You look charmingly, however: But, you cruel creature, why did you not let me know you were ill?

Mrs. Orm. Knowing your exquisite sensibility, Lady Clara, surely it had been barbarous in me to torture your nerves by a recital of my sufferings.

Lady Clara. Oh! fye, fye! when the delicate attentions of friendship can alleviate—I protest, Mrs. Ormond, you've got a mighty pretty house here.

Mrs. Orm. Tolerable. Mr. Rivers insisted upon my removing hither immediately, and therefore things are not quite——

Lady Clara. Mr. Rivers! Dear, that puts me in mind—I want to talk to you about him. Do you know, he put the drollest trick upon me this morning!

Mrs. Orm. [*archly,*] So he did upon me; but you were too cunning for him; I, poor innocent, was completely the dupe of his feigned distresses;

distresses; but upon you, he tells me, they made not the slightest impression.

Lady Clara. Ha, ha, ha! no more they did—He, ha, ha! [*aside*] Spiteful thing, how I hate her!—But, my dear Mrs. Ormond, you—you relieved him then—

Mrs. Orm. Oh! the relief in my power to afford him was very moderate; and in truth our exchange of presents bore no proportion to one another. I had nothing to bestow on him but a very trifle and a dish of tea, and he repaid me with notes of not less than a thousand pounds.

Lady Clara. Mercy on me! a thousand pounds for a dish of tea? How unlucky it was that I had just sent away the chocolate*!

Mrs. Orm. Then he has such plans for equipages, diamonds, and estates—it would quite fatigue you, Lady Clara, only to hear the list.

Lady Clara. Oh! I shall faint presently! [*aside*.] But I hope the dear beggar thinks this trick of his as entertaining as you and I do?

Mrs. Orm. I am afraid he takes the affair a little more seriously.

Lady Clara. But, surely, my dear creature, you can explain to him—

Mrs. Orm. Believe me, Lady Clara, however great may be my cause of complaint, my brother's interest will never cease to be mine; and if my interference can possibly produce a reconciliation—

Lady Clara. You will use it? Let me die now if that isn't being extremely kind; but indeed I always said you had one of the best hearts in the world. And suppose now, to lose no time, you were to bring Mr. Rivers to my house to-night?

Mrs. Orm. To night? Why really—my mourning—

* This trait is borrowed from *Mercier's* 'Habitant de Guadaloupe.'

Lady Clara. Oh! as to your mourning, you know you'll be considered as at home: for, is not my house, is not every thing I possess, as much yours as my own?

Mrs.Orm. You're too kind, Lady Clara; indeed you're too kind!

Lady Clara. Not at all! oh dear, not at all! I shall expect you then, and pray bring Mr. Rivers.

Mrs.Orm. I'll do my best; but in truth I doubt my being able to prevail on him, unless you can make use of Falstaff's excuse, and protest solemnly that you knew him all the while: however, if he should not come, depend upon it's not being a fault of mine.

Lady Clara. Well now, that's a dear creature; and I hope to Heaven you may succeed! Yet should our endeavours to appease Mr. Rivers prove fruitless, I shall console myself with the reflection that at least my dear sister enjoys those advantages of which, by imprudence, I have deprived myself. [*Aside.*] Oh! I could tear her eyes out! [*Exit.*]

Mrs.Orm. Ha, ha, ha! I suspect Lady Clara leaves me not too well pleased with her visit. So, here comes Mr. Rivers!

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. So, Emily, your visitor is gone; and now let me know what brought her hither?

Mrs.Orm. Can you seriously ask that question?

Riv. Why I believe I *could* guess—your brother no doubt—

Mrs.Orm. Even so. Lady Clara's errand was to express her contrition for this morning's adventure with all possible humility, and request your presence at her house to-night for the express

press purpose of receiving her husband's apologies and her own.

Riv. Aye? Well! well! I'm glad to hear it—
—I'll go—

Mrs. Orm. Will you?

Riv. Aye; and so shall you. I intend to take the liberty of tormenting her ladyship—and she'll not be the worse for a little wholesome mortification—

Mrs. Orm. Nay that is a fact which I cannot take upon me to deny.

Riv. And now for the scene of action; where you shall see crowds of coxcombs, and legions of coquettes at my coming, all "*dissolve,*

And like the baseless fabric of a vision

Leave not one sop behind."

Mrs. Orm. You've a secret then for killing insects, I presume?

Riv. No, only dispersing them, and my talisman consists in pronouncing that single cabalistical word "*Distress;*" away they go; for in fact, my dear Emily, a fashionable friend is an absolute bird of passage,—

Which here, while Summer reigns, enjoys the day,
Wings the warm gale, and courts the kindly ray;
But soon as Winter lours, and storms arise,
To brighter scenes the airy wanderer flies,
Where breathe less boisterous winds, where smiles
less clouded skies. }

SCENE II.—Lord LISTLESS's.

Enter Lord LISTLESS and FRIPONEAU.

Lord List. The writ was executed, you say?

Frip. Oui, my lor; et Le Colonel Beauchamp, be tres bien lock up chez cet honnête, Monsieur Touchit!

Lord List. Good! but unluckily Beauchamp has friends, who wont leave him there long.—

Now could I find some lasting means of revenging myself on the puppy—What say you monsieur?

Frip. Mais voyons, my lor, voyons? Suppose—suppose you carry off Mademoiselle Mandeville?

Lord Lift. I carry her off? Why should I take the trouble?

Frip. Mon dieu! you not see? Beauchamp love mademoiselle á la folie; but ven all of von sudden she disappear, he vil swear, vil cry, vil go distract! and ven Mademoiselle Mandeville been two tree days wid your lorsthip, serviteur à la reputation de Mademoiselle Mandeville.

Lord Lift. Um! the idea would be tolerable if it were not that afterwards Beauchamp might take it into his head to cut my throat. Now that I shouldnt like, because you know it would dirty my neckcloth.

Frip. Mai foi, my lor, en verite! dat it voud! mais l'Italie, mi lor? vy you not enlever la petite—

Lord Lift. Right, right. But then how to get hold of her, monsieur?

Frip. Oh! c'est bien facile! I go vid a chair to Lady Clara's, and as mademoiselle go in, or as she come out, I vip her into de sedan, de chair men vip her up, your lorsthip vip her away; et voila' qu'elle est prise, pardi!

Lord Lift. Um, could this be done quietly, and in a proper way—for a bustle always bores me, 'pon my soul!

Enter WALSINGHAM.

Wal. How, in close consultation, my Lord? Perhaps I intrude.

Lord Lift. Oh! by no means; I've a little business indeed, which—

Wal.

Wal. A secret?

Lord List. Um! you might serve me in it, if it were not——

Wal. My dear Lord, too happy if——

Lord List. And you'll be silent?

Wal. As a conceal'd author, whose comedy has just been damn'd. I give you my word! and now——

Lord List. You must know, then, I'm on the point of eloping with a certain young lady——

Wal. You? Good heavens! how can you take so much trouble! and have you a chaise and four ready?

Lord List. No, but I shall order my sedan chair to be prepared immediately.

Wal. A sedan? 'Faith that's new! Well, you'll order your chair to Gretna Green, I hope?

Lord List. Oh! you mistake the business: the lady in question is in love with a fellow, who bores me intolerably; and I carry off his mistress, merely for the sake of plaguing him.

Wal. Merely for the sake of plaguing him!

Lord List. Nothing else, 'pon my soul! The idea's good, an't it?

Wal. Good? its excellent!

Lord List. Now the only difficulty is, how to entice her to the spot where my servants will be waiting for her; and if any friend——

Wal. Entice her! then she's not appris'd of the honour intended her by your lordship?

Lord List. Has'nt the most distant idea of it; and, in fact, hates me like the devil.

Wal. Zounds! my Lord, but that makes the joke a great deal better! And could you possibly doubt my assisting so honourable a design?——

Lord List. Why, to tell you the truth (but remember your promise of secrecy) the lady is no other

other than Miss Mandeville; and as you are Beauchamp's friend——

Wal. Pshaw! what does that signify;—Isn't he a commoner, an't you a peer? Isn't he poor, an't you rich? Isn't he an old friend, an't you a new acquaintance? And can you doubt which of the two I should prefer serving? My dear Lord, pray judge a little more of me by yourself!

Lord List. [*aside.*] A sensible fellow, 'pon my soul!——You'll undertake then to——

Wal. And think myself too happy in being of use to you, only let your chair and servants be ready——

Lord List. Oh! monsieur shall take care of that. Friponeau, attend this gentleman, conduct Miss Mandeville hither, and when she arrives wake me. [*Exit Friponeau.*] Good evening, Walsingham. 'Pon my soul extremely obliged to you; am indeed——a——a——a——'pon my soul! [*Exit.*]

Wal. Go thy ways, thou prince of puppies! But 'tis well that this fellow has made me his confidant, for the consequence of this scheme might have been very unpleasant to Zorayda; but now to mar it, and if possible, get him into a scrape, of which at present he little dreams. The scoundrel!—but alas! there are but too many in the world, who, like him, would soon make themselves villains, if nature hadn't kindly prevented it by making them fools. [*Exit.*]

SCENE

SCENE III.—*An anti-chamber at Lady Clara's.*[*Music within.*]*Company cross the Stage. Servants pass with refreshments.**Enter Miss CHATTERALL and Mrs. BLAB-ALL.**Mrs. Blab.* Nay, my soul, if this letter be authentic, Lady Cara must give up Miss Mandeville, or my acquaintance, I'll assure you!*Miss Chat.* Oh dear! My dear, as to that, I shall visit Lady Clara no more at any rate, unless indeed she gives a masquerade; and then you know nobody need know whether one visits her or not. But accept a favour from her bare-faced! Lord, my love, I blush at the very thought! Oh 'tis a sad family!*Mrs. Blab.* Shocking, my dear!*Miss Chat.* True, my life; only conceive! Beauchamp in gaol, Mrs. Ormond intriguing with him, Miss Mandeville eloped, and Lady Clara giving entertainments when her husband's going to be arrested, and her brother's at the point of death.*Mrs. Blab.* Oh! fye, fye, fye! I protest I'm quite shocked.*Miss Chat.* Shocked, my dear? so am I, an't I?*Mrs. Blab.* But Lord Listless dying? I never heard of that before.*Miss Chat.* No? Dear, I thought every body had heard that Lord Listless having discovered an intrigue

intrigue between Beauchamp and Mrs Ormond with whom he was himself on certain terms— You understand me, my dear?—

Mrs. Blab. Oh Lord! yes my dear 'to be sure I do; well, my love, and so——

Miss Chat. Well, and so, my life, my Lord was so severe in his observations, that at length Beauchamp got into a terrible rage, rapped out three great oaths that he'd be the death of him, seized a blunderbuss (which happened to be upon the breakfast table) shot his lordship through the body, and the Colonel and his enamorata immediately made off for France, with the intention of offering their services to the triumvirate. How odd! an't it?

Mrs. Blab. Odd indeed! But lord! my life, how unlucky it was that Mrs. Ormond should happen to have a blunderbuss lying on her breakfast table?

Miss Chat. Extremely unlucky indeed, my dear. But come let us in, and if Miss Mandeville shews her face to-night, I shall tell Lady Clara what I think of her very plainly! for after all, my dear, to own a truth, the greatest advantage I ever could find in walking straight myself in the path of virtue, was the privilege of insulting those who step a little on one side. Come, my dear!

[*Exeunt*

[*As they go off, enter WALSINGHAM and FRIPONEAU.*]

Wal. Do you see her? There she goes!

Frip. Vid de scarlet plume?

Wal. The same: wait at the great entrance till I entice her to the door, then convey her to your master with all speed.

[*Exit Friponeau.*

Wal.

Wal. Hift, hift; Mifs Chatterall!

Mifs Chatterall *returning.*

Mifs Chat. Mr. Walsingham, didn't you—

Wal. Hush! speak softly: My dear young lady, I've just discovered the most abominable design, the most atrocious plot!

Mifs Chat. Eh! what? against me?

Wal. Against you!

Mifs Chat. Oh! goodness defend me!

Wal. And am come to caution you not to venture near the great entrance without sufficient protection.

Mifs Chat. Dear me! and why?

Wal. The infamous agents of a certain nobleman are waiting there for the express purpose of carrying you off.

Mifs Chat. Lord bless me!

Wal. And though I well know your virtue to be proof against either force or artifice—

Mifs Chat. Undoubtedly!

Wal. Yet, as this affair would make such a disturbance——

Mifs Chat. Terrible!

Wal. Would get into all the newspapers——

Mifs Chat. Odious!

Wal. And render you the subject of general animadversion——

Mifs Chat. Execrable!

Wal. The consequences would be that either your friends would fight a duel on your account——

Mifs Chat. Tremendous!

Wal. Or you quiet the business by a marriage with his lordship.

Mifs Chat. Charming—Monstrous I mean!

Wal.

Wal. The best thing you can do, therefore, is to send for a guard——

Miss Chat. I'll do it instantly——

Wal. Return home under its protection——

Miss Chat. With the utmost diligence——

Wal. And above all, take care not to approach the great entrance.

Miss Chat. I approach it! Oh Mr. Walsingham! I'd rather die than advance a single step towards it: Good evening, and a thousand thanks!
[*Exeunt severally.*]

[*A pause, after which, Miss Chatterall puts in her head, looks round cautiously, then hurries across the stage, and exit.*]

Re-enter WALSINGHAM laughing.

Wal. So my plot has taken effect. Now if her friend can but persuade Lord Lisle to repair her injuries by marriage, (and I know he has no great fondness for fighting,) the breed will be excellent, and I shall immediately put in my claim for a puppy!

Enter ZORAYDA (in an evening Dress) as from the Assembly Room.

Wal. What, Miss Mandeville, retiring so early!—How is this!—You seem agitated!

Zor. Oh Mr. Walsingham!—I know not how—I dare not—but you are Colonel Beauchamp's friend.

Wal. He has none more sincere.

Zor. A dreadful report is circulating within—a quarrel this morning—a duel—I heard the story but imperfectly, but heard enough to alarm me for Beauchamp's safety. For pity's sake, sir,
hasten

hasten to him—and should you find this report well founded—

Wal. I will strain every nerve to prevent the consequences. But what antagonist—?

Zor. Lord Liffless was named.

Wal. Lord Liffless! Oh! to my certain knowledge he is otherwise engaged at present, and has too much respect for his own safety to endanger any other person's. However, I'll go immediately in search of Beauchamp. So farewell, my dear young lady! make yourself easy, and depend on my care. *[Exit.]*

Zor. I cannot rejoin the unfeeling crowd within! I'll to my chamber, and if possible to rest. Ah! no—there is now no rest for me!—Repose never visits my eye lids till they close wearied with weeping: The sounds which lull me to sleep are the groans of a forsaken father, and the spirit of dreams still repeats to me his parting curse! Oh that my next slumbers might be the slumbers of the grave! Oh that my eyes could for ever shut out light, since my heart is closed against peace for ever!

SONG.

AIR—“*Auld Robin Gray.*”

COLD winter frowns, but soon again
Shall lovely spring appear:
The sun is set, but soon again
His glorious head shall rear:
Night veils the skies, but soon shall day.
Once more illumine the plain:
But never can a guilty heart
Be soothed to peace again.

Oh! sad is my soul!
All my nights are pass'd in tears,
I think upon my father's house,
And all that home endears;

G

Think

62 RIVERS; OR, THE EAST INDIAN:

Think, how that father lov'd me well,
But all his love was vain;
I broke his heart, and never shall
Mine own know peace again.

Exit.

SCENE IV.—*A magnificent Apartment at
Modish's, illuminated.*

MODISH, TRIFLE, Lady HUBBUB, Mrs. BLAB-
ALL, &c. *discovered—Card Tables, &c.—
Ladies and Gentlemen playing at them.*

Lady Hub. Well I never heard any thing so
strange! Poor Lady Clara, I'm sure I pity her
excessively, though I can't but own that she de-
serves it.

Mrs. Blab. Richly Lady Hubbub, richly!
And, for my part, I shan't be sorry to see her
pride have a fall; which must be the case shortly
for, they say Mr. Rivers has positively refused
to advance Modish a single guinea.

Trifle. Nay, it's even whispered there are
three executions in the house at this moment.

Lady Hub. Oh, as for that, since I have known
it, *this* house has never been without an execu-
tion in it for three days together.

Mrs. Blab. Very true, and therefore I wonder
that Modish should have neglected to provide
himself with a rotten borough; for he ought to
have known, that as he couldn't pay his debts,
he had but one alternative, and must certainly
get into prison unless he got into parliament.

Lady Hub. Oh! here's Lady Clara!

Enter Lady CLARA, splendidly dressed.

Lady Clara [as entering.] How d'ye do?—
Charmed to see you! Been here long? You
there, Trifle! Ah, Lady Hubbub.

Lady

Lady Hub. Oh my dear Lady Clara!

Lady Clara. What's the matter?

Lady Hub. Mr. Rivers—I'm so concerned for you? —

Mrs. Blab. I could cry with vexation!

Lady Hub. To lose such a fortune by a trick! my dear creature, it grieves me to the heart!

Mrs. Blab. And I'm told you must part with your beautiful set of cream-coloured ponies?—Lord! Lord! you've no idea how that distresses me!

Lady Clara. Now let me die but you're both of you very kind; and it quite delights me that I'm able to relieve you from such excessive affliction. Whatever you may have heard to the contrary, Mr. Rivers and Modish are on the best terms possible, and I hope in a few minutes to have the pleasure of making him known to you.—[*Aside*] Spiteful toads!

Lady Hub. No really! Lord, I'm prodigious glad to hear it! [*Aside*] I wish you were both at the bottom of the Thames!

Mrs. Blab. Delighted, my dear Lady Clara! Quite delighted, I protest!—[*Aside*.] Another birth-day suit to cut out mine, I'd lay my life, on't.

Lady Clara. [*Aside*].—Well, of all earthly torments, the sympathy of one's friends is certainly the greatest. Ha! Miss Chatterall! Heavens! What's the matter?

Enter Miss CHATTERALL hastily.

Miss Chat. Oh Lady Clara! Oh Lady Hubbub! I shall faint, Lady Hubbub! I shall certainly faint.

Lady Clara. Faint! Why, what has alarmed you?

Mod.

Mod. Aye, aye! All things in order; tell your story first, and faint afterwards.

Miss Chat. Oh! your brother, Lady Clara! your vile brother! I can't speak for passion!

Lady Clara. What has he done?

Miss Chat. What indeed? Why he has—he has—[*bursting into tears*—he has carried me off in a sedan chair! So he has! How monstrous! wasn't it?

Lady Clara. Carried you off! Mercy, why should he do that?

Mod. Aye, why indeed? Oh! I don't believe a word on't.

Miss Chat. Not believe it? Oh Gemini! but it's very true though; and what's more, fir, what's more, I'm almost morally certain you're one of his accomplices!

Mod. I? Oh fye, Miss Chatterall, fye!

All. Oh! fye, fye, fye!

Miss Chat. Fye, indeed! Fye! Oh that ever I should live to be fyed! Lady Clara, as I hope to be married, was carried by force to your brother's house this evening; and when he first landed me out of the sedan, to give the devil his due, I must say he was civil enough; but as soon as he saw that I was I, and nobody but myself, he yawned in my face, said I was a great bore, put me into the chair, bade the men box me up tight, and, without saying another syllable, sent me back again! How disagreeable wasn't it? [*crying bitterly*] Never, no surely never before was such an insult offered to virtue, delicacy, and the first cousin of an Irish Peer! But I'll be revenged! I'll to my lawyer's, and have an action for burglary brought against him without delay; and if the law won't do me right, I warrant my Irish uncle Sir Blarney O'Blunderbuss will! Oh he'll come to my assistance, good soul, at t he first word;

word; will insist on his Lordships's repairing by marriage the injury done my reputation; and when I once find myself his wife—oh what a miserable wretch I'll make him! [*Exit.*]

Lady Clara. [*laughing.*] But what can all this mean? Ha! Modish, I see Rivers advancing.

Mod. [*aside*] I tremble to meet him; I feel how ungratefully I have treated him; and my only consolation is, that I felt it before I knew how much my ingratitude had cost me.

Lady Clara. So here he comes—Now, ladies—now, ladies, you shall see—

Enter RIVERS and Mrs. ORMOND.

Mrs. Orm. [*to Rivers*]—Remember your promise—Gentleness!

Riv. Oh, never fear!

Lady Clara. [*to Mrs. Ormond*]. And here you are at last? My dear creature, you've no notion how you've agitated me; I've expected you this half hour, and was almost afraid that some accident had happened—and Mr. Rivers too, I declare! My dear sir, I can scarcely thank you for this visit for laughing when I think of the ridiculous affair of this morning; well I never was so quizzed in my life; but you must certainly have a world of humour!

Riv. [*drily.*] Um, aye, it was ridiculous enough; but yet the best part of the joke is still to come.

Lady Clara. Is it? Dear, I'm prodigiously glad to hear it, for it has entertained me so, you have no idea—

Riv. Pardon me, I can conceive it perfectly.

Lady Clara. Impossible, quite impossible! And indeed I called at your house this evening for the sole purpose of saying how extremely—

Riv. My house! Mrs. Ormond's you mean. Your Ladyship forgets—I live at the three Blue Posts in Little Britain.

Lady Clara. Ha! ha! ha! very true; and Modish must pay his respects to you at the three Blue Posts, I suppose?

Riv. May I expect so much condescension from Mr. Modish?

Mod. Mr. Rivers, I will not aggravate my fault by attempting to excuse it; I am heartily ashamed of my behaviour this morning, and see it myself in such offensive colours, that I cannot hope by any present submissions to obtain your pardon.

Riv. Give me your hand, sir; the best thing is certainly not to commit a fault, but the next best thing is to be sorry for it when committed. And yet, when you reflect on Lady Clara's very flattering reception of me this morning, you cannot possibly found any expectations on my assistance, though, Heavens knows, at this very moment you stand wofully in need of it.

Lady Clara. At this moment?

Riv. Certainly; for in the first place there is an execution in the house;

Triste. Good night, Modish. [Exit.

Riv. There goes one! [aside]—Then, Modish, Squeez'em the userer has taken out a writ against you.

Mrs. Blab. Your servant, Lady Clara. [Exit.

Riv. [aside.] There go two!—So that you will certainly go to prison to-morrow, unless you can borrow a considerable sum among your acquaintances—

Lady Hub. Call Lady Hubbub's servants, if you please, sir. Exit.

Riv. [*aside.*] There goes a third!—And can get two of your friends to stand bail for you.

All. Mr. Modish, we wish you a very good night! [*Exeunt.*]

Manent. RIVERS, MODISH, Lady CLARA, and Mrs. ORMOND.

Riv. Bravo, bravo! There goes the whole covey!

Mod. Narrow-hearted rascals!

Lady Clara. What, all gone! Lord blefs me! What all!—

Riv. Aye, aye, Lady Clara, the coast is clear; and what otherwise could you expect? what else than—

Mrs. Orm. Hush! hush! my dear sir! Surely they are already sufficiently mortified, and to punish them farther would be both cruel and unnecessary—Suffer me then for to plead for my brother—and—

Mod. Emily, you must plead in vain: Lady Clara's imprudence has been too gross, my ingratitude too culpable to—

Riv. May be so, George; but you may as well confine your reproaches to your own breast, since your sister has already carried the point for you, and I have promised to discharge your debts.

Mod. and Lady Clara. Dear sir, in what manner—

Riv. Nay, no thanks, or if you needs must pay them, offer them to Emily; they are her due, and I can tell you, George—

Enter JOHN, delivers a letter to Mrs. ORMOND, and exit.

Mrs. Orm. [*after reading it.*] Good heavens!

Riv. Emily, what has alarmed you? You change colour!

Mrs.

Mrs. Orm. Something has happened which— Might request a few moments private conversation with you ?

Lady Clara. Oh ! pray consider yourself at home, my dear—we leave you. [*To Modish*].— Will you come, Love ?

Mod. Come, my life ?—To be sure I will.

[*Exeunt arm and arm.*]

Riv. [*locking after them.*] Fudge ! and now,, Emily, what dismal tale have you to relate ?

Mrs. Orm. One, my dear sir, which interests me nearly. Soon after your leaving me this morning, I owed my rescue from the grossest impertinence to an officer, who unluckily was indebted for a large sum to the coxcomb by whom I was insulted. This note informs me, that in consequence of having afforded me his protection, he has been arrested, and his now confined at the suit of Lord Littlefs.

Riv. Confined ? He shall not be so long.— England needs such men, nor shall she be deprived of them, while I cannot help it.—What does your friend owe.

Mrs. Orm. Not less than 3000*l.*

Riv. A large sum ! But no matter ! Set your heart at rest, Emily ; the debt shall be discharged.

Mr. Orm. My dear sir !—

Riv. Psha ! dear nonsense ! And his name ?

Mrs. Orm. You will be surprised to hear, that my friend is no other than Colonel Beauchamp.

Riv. [*starting.*] Beauchamp !—

Mrs. Orm. Even he ; and his conduct to me this morning must convince you, that, if he has faults, he is not without virtues, but I hasten with these good tidings to Miss Mandeville. Oh Mr. Rivers ! believe me I feel well, how trifling a gift is the wealth which you heap upon me, compared

pared to the advantages which my son will reap from your acquaintance ; much from your precepts, but more from your example. [*Exit.*

Riv. [solus.] My embarrassments increase every hour—Why, why must Beauchamp have faults to none but me?—What course shall I pursue?—Suppose—Yes! I'll discharge his debts under a feigned name, and when he's at liberty, challenge him in my own ; the first to reward his merits, the second to avenge my wrongs ! It shall be so—and if I fall to-morrow—then may my poor Zorayda find Heaven more merciful than she found her father !—May God forgive her, but I never can ! [*Exit.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE I.—Lady CLARA's.

ZORAYDA discovered seated on a Sofa, and leaning her Head on Mrs. ORMOND's Shoulders: Lady CLARA is standing near her.

LADY CLARA.

NAY, sweet Zorayda, why this despair?—Probably ere this, the cause of your distress has ceased, and Beauchamp is at liberty.

Mrs.Orm. Calm your spirits, dearest girl!—Believe me this excess of grief is childish, when every thing bids you hope—

Zor. Hope! Mine is fled for ever! My father, madam, my father! I planted his path with thorns, I should have strewed it with roses: he warmed me in his bosom; the snake stung him to the heart: he loved me; I abandoned him:—he cursed me, and I dare not hope!

Mrs.Orm. Oh blush, Zorayda! when thus sinking beneath misfortune—

Zor. Not beneath misfortune; 'tis beneath the burthen of my faults I sink. Oh! well may innocence see the lightning flash without alarm; well may virtue lift her head undaunted above the billows. But when with sufferings comes the consciousness of their being deserved, oh they are insupportable, and I faint beneath the weight of mine!

Mrs.

Mrs.Orm. Dear unhappy girl! Would to Heaven Rivers were returned! Pray, Lady Clara, did Zorayda see him this morning?

Lady Clara. No: I have since heard that by some unaccountable mistake he was conducted to Miss Chatterall instead of her.

Mrs.Orm. Miss Chatterall? Oh! then the case is clear. Know then, my Zoraydo—[*Knocking without*]

Lady Clara. Hark! a carriage stops—It must be Rivers.

Zor. [*Starting from the sofa.*] Oh! I fear! I fear! —

Mrs.Orm. You grow pale; retire, my love, and compose yourself.

Zor. But Beauchamp—

Mrs.Orm. As soon as I have learnt the result of Rivers's visit, I will hasten to let you know it.

Zor. And delay not, pray delay not!—Oh father, father! could you know what I feel at this moment, you would own, that, great as my faults have been, they are equalled by my sufferings! [*Exit.*]

Mrs.Orm. Poor Zorayda! Perhaps Mr. Rivers's intercession may induce her father—

Re-enter ZORAYDA hastily through the Folding-Doors.

Zor. Save me, madam!—Oh save me! save me!

Mrs.Orm. What alarms you? Save you from whom?

Zor. My father! Oh my father! I saw him from the window by the flambeau's light! Even now he entered the house.

Lady Clara and Mrs.Orm. How! Your father!

Riv.

Riv. [*without.*] Very well—I'll go up stairs.

Zor. Hark! hark! hark! 'tis his voice, 'tis his voice! Oh, where shall I hide me, whither fly to avoid his resentment?

Mrs. Orm. I know not what—Yet surely—Fear nothing, my love; all shall yet be well—leave it to me; compose your spirits—retire, and wait till I rejoin you—Lady Clara!

Lady Clara. I will take care of her—Come, dear Zorayda!

Zor. I obey; but, oh how cruel is it to shudder at his approach, whose sight is dearer to me than my own, and banish myself from his presence, whose embrace I would die to obtain!

Exit with Lady Clara.

Mrs. Orm. Yes, I must try it; Rivers must have his daughter again.

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. So that business is done. There, Emily, set your heart at rest; your champion is free.—But hey! the deuce! you seem if possible still more disturbed than when I left you!—I hope you've not met with more impertinent peers and generous protectors?

Mrs. Orm. Not exactly; the cause of my present emotion rather concerns my former protector.

Riv. What! Beauchamp again?

Mrs. Orm. No, the business now regards Beauchamp's mistress; but I find you've made a terrible mistake. The lady you saw here this evening was a woman of the very strictest virtue.

Riv. Zounds! what a blunder! Why the poor creature must have thought me mad, for I proposed packing her off to India without ceremony.

mony. But where then is the real Miss Mandeville? Does she not reside with Lady Clara?

Mrs.Orm. She does, and you may now, my dear sir, execute the plan which——

Riv. Nay, I've blundered in the outset of it so confoundedly, that I wish some other person——

Mrs.Orm. No one can undertake this business so properly as yourself. I've persuaded her that your intercession with her father——

Riv. Mine? Why I don't know him even by sight!

Mrs.Orm. True—but your consequence—your Indian connections—In short, see her; talk to her; advise her: Shew her the impropriety of continuing with Beauchamp, paint to her what her father must suffer at her absence, and comfort her with the hope of obtaining his pardon: But be gentle with her, I entreat you; moderate your naturally impetuous temper; and beware not to heap fresh anguish on an heart, whose wounds are already deep—whose sufferings are already exquisite! *(Exit.*

Riv. Poor Emily! She little thinks that the man from whose friendship she hopes so much, in a few hours will either be expiring himself, or a fugitive from England, stained with the blood of Beauchamp! My will, however, secures her in affluence, and after that——

Enter Mrs. ORMOND and ZORAYDA veiled, through the Folding-Doors.

Riv. But see, she comes with her portegée—
Ha! veiled, I see!

Mrs.Orm. *(aside to Zorayda.)* Nay, dearest girl, why thus terrified? Doubt it not, all will turn out well.

H *Zor.*

Zor. (aside to Mrs. Ormond.) Yes, yes! 'tis he!—How I tremble at his presence!

Mrs. Orm. In vain have I endeavoured, my dear sir, to convince Miss Mandeville that she dreads, without reason, the severity of your strictures. I assure her that you will speak to her——

Riv. Most soothingly! most kindly! Even as a father would speak to his daughter.

Mrs. Orm. (eagerly.) Right! exactly right! Remember your promise—Speak to her as an indulgent father would to his daughter, his beloved and repentant daughter, I leave you with her. My dear girl——

Zor. (embracing her.) Oh! madam!

Mrs. Orm. (aside) Would it were over! Yet what should I dread? I know well the excellence of his nature; and hard indeed must that heart be which can listen unmoved to the pleading of such a penitent! *(Exit.)*

Riv. (after a pause) I—I—presume, Miss Mandeville, you are aware how delicate a task Mrs. Ormond has imposed on me. *(Zorayda bows.)* So delicate, in truth, that no sentiment could induce my undertaking it, less strong than gratitude for your generous intentions towards myself, and the interest which Emily's account of you first inspired me with, and which your own appearance could not fail to increase.

Zor. (aside) Oh that dear voice! Yet how terrible it sounds!

Riv. I will not dwell upon the worth of public opinion, the blessings of self satisfaction, the torments of present shame and of future remorse; I know full well how light these considerations weigh against love when a young hand holds the balance. 'Twas your heart which led you astray; to your heart then will I make my appeal; and, if

if it be not marble, I shall not make my appeal in vain. Miss Mandeville, I will speak of your father—will explain how heavy is a father's curse—will paint how dreadful is a father's anguish!—Well can I describe that anguish! I have felt it, feel it still! I once had a daughter—!

Zor. (aside) His voice falters!

Riv. This daughter——Oh! how I loved her, words cannot say, thought cannot measure! This daughter sacrificed me for a villain, fled from my paternal roof, and——her flight has broken my heart—her ingratitude has dug my grave!

Zor. (aside) How I suffer! Oh my God!

Riv. (recovering himself) Young Lady, my daughter's seducer was Beauchamp! He has deserted her; so doubt it not, will he desert you. My execration is upon her! Oh! let not your father's fall upon you as heavy. Haste to him ere it be too late! Wait not till his resentment becomes rooted—till his resolve becomes immutable—'till he sheds such burning tears as I now shed—'till he suffers such bitter pangs as I now suffer—'till he curses as I now curse——

Zor. (throwing aside her veil, and sinking on her knees) Spare me! spare me!

Riv. Zorayda!—(after a pause) Away!

Zor. Pardon! pardon!

Riv. Leave me, girl!

Zor. While I have life, never again! Never; no, not even though you still frown on me! Nay, struggle not! Father, I am a poor desperate distracted creature! Still shall my lips, till sealed by death, cry to you for mercy—still will I thus clasp my father's hands, till he cuts off mine, or else forgives me!

Riv. Zorayda! Girl!——Hence foolish tears!

Zor. I hope not for kindness, I sue but for pardon—I ask not to live happy in your love, I plead but to die soothed by your forgiveness. Still loath my fault, frown on me still, dash me on the earth, trample me in the dust, kill me—but forgive me!

Riv. Her voice—her tears—I can support them no longer.

(Breaks from her and hastens to the door.)

Zor. *(wringing her hands in despair)* Cruel! cruel! My God! my God!—Oh! were my mother but alive!

Riv. *(starting.)* Her mother!

Zor. Ah! he stops. She lives then! lives too in his heart! Plead thou for me, fainted spirit! plead thou too, in former sorrows my greatest comfort, in present sufferings my only hope!—*(Taking a picture from her bosom)* Look on it, my father! 'tis the portrait of your wife, of your adored Zorayda!—Look on these eyes—you have so often said they were like mine. Be moved by my voice—you have so often said it reminded you of my mother's!—'Tis she who thus sinks at your feet—'tis she who now cries to you, Pardon your erring, your repentant child!—Father, I stand on the brink of ruin: already the ground gives way beneath my feet—yet a moment, and I am lost!—Save me! Father, save me! If not for my sake, if not for your own, oh father! save me for my mother's sake!

Riv. *(Looking alternately at the portrait and her)*
—Zorayda—Zorayda!—My child!—my child!
(Sinks upon her bosom.)

Enter MODISH, Lady CLARA and Mrs.
ORMOND.

Mrs. Orm. He yields, and we triumph.

Riv.

Riv. (Recovering himself.) Yet mark me, Zorayda—Beauchamp—

Zor. Alas !

Riv. Never must you meet again ; to-morrow either sees him stained with my blood, or this hand must—

Enter BEAUCHAMP and WALSINGHAM.

All. How ! Beauchamp ?

Riv. Astonishment !—(To Zorayda sternly)—Follow me !

Beau. Stay, Mr. Rivers ; hear me for one moment.

Riv. Hear you ? Amazing confidence ! What ? hear you extenuate your crime ? hear you say that—

Beau. That I am guilty, that misery ought to be my lot ; but that, if my lot be misery, it must also be Zorayda's. On your affection for her I throw myself. Great have been my faults, great have been Zorayda's injuries—yet, if suffered to repair them—

Riv. Repair them ! and your wife !—

Beau. Her death has been long reported ; this letter, just received, ascertains the fact. My hand is free, and from the first moment I beheld her, that hand was destined to your daughter. I feel how little I deserve her—feel the whole weight of my offence, and loath myself for its commission :—but my punishment would be Zorayda's— but Zorayda's fate is interwoven with mine. Be this my plea, when thus I kneel before you, imploring permission to expiate my faults to your daughter and yourself, by affection for my wife, and unremitting attention to her father.

Wal.

Wal. Nor imagine, sir, that your wealth influences this proposal. Continue still your disposition in Mrs. Ormond's favour; my fortune is ample, it hath long been destined to Beauchamp, and the day which makes him your son makes him my heir.

Riv. (hesitating) I know not—I ought not——

Mrs. Orm. Dear sir, if *my* entreaties——

Wal. If my advice——

Zor. (Embracing him.) Dear, dear father!

All. Pardon! pardon!

Riv. I am vanquished! Rise, rise my son, and receive from me Zorayda!

Beau. My love! my wife! Oh, teach me to thank your father for so invaluable a gift!

Zor. Edward, to be yours, and with his approbation!——Dear, dear sir, is not all this a dream? Am I indeed again your Zorayda? Is your affection indeed mine again?

Riv. Your's it was ever; and surely, had I loved you less, I had been appeased more easily. Many a pang, my child, has your absence cost me, but the pleasure of this moment overpays them all. Sweet, oh! sweet are a father's tears shed on the bosom of a repentant child. Hear this, ye flinty-hearted—hear it, and pardon!—Yet how is this? when every other face wears a smile, why hangs a cloud on the brow of my Zorayda?

Zor. Ah, my father! 'tis a cloud which must never be removed; for, 'tis the gloom of self-reproach!--I have erred and been forgiven; but am I therefore less culpable? Your indulgence has been great; but is my fault therefore less enormous? Oh, no, no, no! The calm of innocence has for ever left me, the courage of conscious virtue must be mine no more! Still must the
memory

memory of errors past torment me, and embitter every future joy :—still must I blush to read scorn in the world's eye, suspicion in my husband's :—and still must feel this painful truth most keenly, that she who once deviates from the paths of virtue, though she may obtain the forgiveness of others, never can obtain her own !

FINIS.

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